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ECO Foreign Ministers Conclude Tehran Conference

Experts Prepare Final Documents

LD2601213394 Tehran IRNA in English 1651 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 26, IRNA—Senior experts of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) here Wednesday [26 January] prepared documents of the ECO programs for the final approval of the foreign ministers of the organization. The documents envisage the organization's programes for the next year within the long-run objectives of ECO.

Issues relevant to the promotion of roads, transportation, tele- communication cooperation between the member states through cables, optical fibers and statelite, and establishment of a joint airline were raised in the meeting.

Cooperation Documents Approved

NC2701093494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] The fourth session of foreign ministers of the 10 member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization concluded this morning after two days of discussions and exchanges of views.

According to our correspondent, the deliberations at the concluding session lasted 10 hours at the end of which documents of cooperation among ECO members in the technical, economic, transport, and long-distance communications fields were approved.

At the concluding session, the foreign ministers of the member countries stressed the need to strengthen the ECO Secretariat and to reduce trade tariffs so that member countries will pay a tariff of 10 percent rather than 20 percent. The participants at the fourth session of the ECO foreign ministers' conference named Turkmenistan as the venue for the next ECO session.

In its final statement, the Tehran session stressed expanding cooperation in the economic and industrial fields as well as in the field of health and hygiene between the ECO and other international organizations. Two separate accords were signed between the ECO and two specialized international organizations—UNIDO [United Nations Industrial Development Organization] and UNICEF.

Joint Communique Issued

LD2701104194 Tehran IRNA in English 0941 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 27, IRNA—Foreign ministers of the 10-member Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in a joint communique here Thursday [27 January] reiterated the significance of ECO as a regional economic organization which can play a major role in the development of the region and in raising the standard of living for people in this part of the world.

The communique was issued at the end of the fourth meeting of the ECO foreign ministers here Thursday morning.

Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati who currently chairs the ECO Council of Ministers, noted that today ECO encompasses over 300 million people, more than seven million square kilometers and enormous resources.

ECO was originally founded by Iran, Turkey and Pakistan. Since two years ago it has been joined by Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In its communique, the council appreciated secretary-general's efforts in establishing relatioes with international organizations and expressed satisfaction over the conclusion of agreements for cooperation with those agencies.

The ministers urged ECO secretary-general to continue his efforts to further develop cooperation with international organizations with a view to benefiting from their sources of information, experience as well as for projecting ECO as a prestigious, forward looking and dynamic international organization.

The council further welcomed closer cooperation between ECO and international organizations and the agreements concluded with Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific (ESCAP) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

The participants also welcomed the signing of memorandums of understanding between ECO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Tehran during the session.

The ECO Council of Ministers also welcomed the results reached in the first joint meeting of the ECO health ministers with UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO) and recognized the significance of mobilizing the necessary expertise and financial resources for the projects in the health sector with due attention to the ECO plan of action for safeguarding children toward the year 2000.

It also reaffirmed the proposal for the reduction of tariffs and recommended that joint measures should be made by the member states in their fight against the catastrophic consequences of natural disasters together with necessary measures for the prevention of contagious diseases and their concomitant detrimental socio-economic consequences.

The council, referring to the availability of the vast energy resources in the region, emphasized that immediate steps should be taken for comprehensive utilization of the resources to the benefit of the people of the region.

The communique in conclusion reiterated the importance of narcotics abuse control and underlined that a comprehensive plan for combating the growing menace of drugs should be prepared by the year 1995.

Senior representatives from UNICEF, UNIDO, ESCAP, IDB, WHO, Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also took part in the meeting which was opened by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani last Tuesday.

On Wednesday, the U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali sent a message to the ministerial session in which he said that ECO testified to the strength of the regional organizations of the post-Cold War era.

Velayati on Results of Conference

LD2701122194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] The ECO session was concluded in Tehran this morning after two days of dicussions. The session's final communique shows that the member countries have reached comprehensive agreements on various issues. Our correspondent, who attended the very lengthy closing session, reports:

[Unidentified correspondent] According to the official agenda, originally the session was to issue its final communique at 1900 yesterday. However, due to existence of different points of view expressed by the members, the communique was not ratified until 0600 this morning, thus the session was in effect extended by 12 hours.

We can explain this delay in the light of the speeches made earlier by the participants. Later on, each of the speakers were seeking to incorporate in the final communique their points of view vis-a-vis the overriding national issues in their respective countries. A great deal of the session's time was thereby taken by this process. Nonetheless, the participants seemed satisfied with the debates since they had been able to put forward their problems and issues. [passage omitted]

In general, however, one's impression of the two-day session was that the participants as a whole were satisfied with the session's decisions. In my conversations with the participants, including Shemshad Ahmad, the ECO secretary general, I learned that they were happy with the session's outcome.

At the end of the session, I asked Mr. Velayati to remark on the outcome of the session, even though he was very tired.

[Begin Velayati recording] One of the most important decisions adopted in the session was to call the next 10 years the decade of communication and transport. In view of the need to carry out infrastructural works in order to facilitate economic development and pave the way for all-embracing cooperation, activities in the areas of communications and transport are fundamentally important. The transport ministers of ECO member countries recently met in Almaty, and as far as we know, ECO members pay special attention to this sphere. It was, nonetheless, decided that national projects should be formulated and implemented in harmony with ECO's general communications plans and projects. This is particularly significant in view of the fact that the majority of ECO member countries do not have any maritime borders, hence the importance of developing communication and transport networks. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Arab-Israeli Talks

'Arafat Briefs Norwegian Delegation on Talks

NC2601175094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1715 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—This evening, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat met a Norwegian delegation led by Torje Rod Larsen, director of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's Middle East Department, at his residence in the al-Andalus Palace in Heliopolis.

Palestinian sources said 'Arafat briefed the delegation members on efforts to surmount the obstacles hindering the implementation of the Jericho-Gaza agreement, including the talks in Cairo between Palestinian and Israeli negotiators to formulate a plan to implement the accord.

Norwegian diplomatic sources said the Norwegian delegation that arrived in Cairo last night will stay in the country to follow the Palestinian-Israeli talks and will be ready to offer any necessary assistance to reach an agreement on how to implement the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Norway played a major role in the secret Palestinian-Israeli talks in Oslo, which lasted nine months and led to the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles on 13 September.

Sha'th Believes Progress 'Possible' at Talks

NC2601201894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1855 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to the Palestinian president and the head of Palestine's delegation to the negotiations with the Israeli team, has said he believes progress between the two sides is possible. We will resume the negotiations tomorrow, he said.

After a seven-hour meeting with the Israeli delegation, he added: We hope to achieve results and we will continue the negotiations on withdrawal.

Sha'th left the hotel at the end of the third round of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations today to meet Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat at his residence in the al-Andalus Palace.

In his statement, Sha'th said that throughout the day, the two delegations exchanged working papers and are still doing so.

It was noted during the seven-hour meeting that a Palestinian delegation member was in constant touch with 'Arafat. MENA has learned that if agreement is reached on the paper of understanding on the crossings and Jericho, the Security Committee will draft the agreement in its meetings in Taba next week.

Responsible Palestinian sources told MENA that the Israeli delegation still refuses to grant the Palestinian side administrative supervision over the religious sites in Jabal al-Qarantal and al-Maghtis. The sources added that some progress was made on the crossings issue.

The Israeli delegation is made up of Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry; Yo'el Singer, legal adviser at the Israeli Foreign Ministry; and Uzi Dayan, political planning director at the ministry.

The Palestinian delegation consists of Nabil Sha'th, Palestine's Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal, and the head of the PLO Economic Department, Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala'.

Two Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials and two Norwegian Foreign Ministry officials are taking part in the meetings as observers outside the conference hall.

Al-Tarawinah: Jordanian-Israeli Talks 'Good'

JN2701084994 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 27 Jan 94 p 24

[Report by Caroline Faraj]

[Excerpt] Dr. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, Jordanian ambassador in Washington and head of the Jordanian delegation to the bilateral peace talks, has described his second-day three-hour talks with chief Israeli delegate Elyaqim Rubenstein as good and said they constitute a good start.

Reached by telephone in Washington, Dr. al-Tarawinah told AL-RA'Y: We began to discuss topics on the Jordanian-Israeli agenda, delving into some details. The aim is to make sure that the Israeli position on them has not changed since 14 September 1993, the date the agenda was signed.

Dr. al-Tarawinah added: We also reviewed the points at which we stopped in the previous round. The purpose is to prepare for the next round of bilateral talks and for the work of the two sides' working teams and experts. This, of course, will take place only after all the Arab delegations decide to collectively participate in the next round. It is natural that the heads of delegations are not experts or technicians in all specializations. Therefore, we began in this second coordination and consultation meeting at the State Department to prepare for sub-agendas for the three working groups—environment, water, and energy; refugees and economy; and security and borders. He added that these agendas are still under discussion and no final agreement regarding them has yet been reached. [passage omitted]

Inter-Arab Affairs

UMA Summit To Convene in Tunisia 5 Feb

LD2601183894 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Mohamed Amamou, secretary general of the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] has announced that the next summit of the union would be convened on 5 February in Tunisia.

In an exclusive statement to the Moroccan daily LIBERATION, Amamou said that the five Maghreban states had confirmed their participation in Tunisia's summit. Amamou, who assessed the union's concrete achievements, said that 25 agreements had been concluded so far, five of which had come into effect after approval by the five Maghreban states in July last year, while the remainder of the agreements were pending approval by the authorities of the countries concerned.

Islamic Affairs

ICO Chief Meets With Iranian Leaders in Tehran

Al-Ghabid, Hashemi-Rafsanjani Hold Talks

LD2601182294 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received the Islamic Conference Organisation [ICO] Secretary General Mr. Hamid al-Ghabid, who is in Tehran.

At the meeting, the president placed emphasis on the role and significance of the ICO in helping to resolve Islamic countries' problems. He said: The world of Islam, with 1.2 billion people and various political and economic levers, has a huge power, the appropriate and timely utilization of which requires decisions, planning, avoidance of side-issues, and attention to the main problems among Islamic countries.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed regret at current problems which have been imposed on the world of Islam due to inappropriate utilization of capabilities and resources in Islamic countries and added: Such problems can be solved through correct understanding of the world

of Islam's sensitive current conditions and through coordination and exchange of views among planning officials of Islamic countries, as well as the targeted and coherent utilization of power levers.

The president expressed concern over the continuation of war and fratricide in the Islamic country of Afghanistan and pointed out: The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly warned leaders of the warring sides in Afghanistan about the dire and worrying consequences of recent clashes and has called on them to think of the interests of the Muslim people, and the reconstruction and renovation of Afghanistan before anything else.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani described the continuing genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the heart of so-called civilized Europe as a bitter incident which has hurt the feelings of over 1 billion Muslims and shamed the indifferent governments which have merely watched events. He said: The brave resistance and steadfastness of the oppressed people of Bosnia-Herzegovina have aroused fear and concern among the aggressive Serb forces and their western supporters. They are trying to break this resistance and force the Muslims to surrender. Therefore, one must strengthen the resistance of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and make the enemies lose hope of achieving such a surrender. He continued: The ICO and the free countries of the world are also expected to stop the further trampling of the rights of the oppressed people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Pointing out that Islamic countries expect more from the ICO in solving the problems of the Islamic world, including the problem of Palestine, the president announced the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran for more cooperation with that organization in order to play a more active role in the world of Islam.

The ICO secretary general briefed the president on the current activities and programs of the organization. Speaking of the problems of the world of Islam—Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, and a number of other Islamic countries—he said: The stances of the ICO are based on the establishment of peace and tranquillity and preventing the spread of differences, as well as ending them.

Pointing to the efforts of the organization in putting an end to the clashes in Afghanistan, he said: Afghan leaders must be convinced to resolve their problems and differences peacefully through negotiations.

The ICO secretary general expressed regret over the fact that apart from a limited number of countries among Islamic countries, other countries have not given much active support to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He expressed the hope that with the active and all-encompassing cooperation of Islamic countries, the ICO could play a more active role in resolving the problems of the world of Islam.

Al-Ghabid, Velayati on Islamic Problems

NC2701093594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] In his speech at the fourth ministerial session of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] in Tehran, the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] secretary general called for the NATO forces to attack the positions of the aggressor Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, self-determination for the Kashmiri people, a halt to the war in Afghanistan, and the withdrawal of Armenian forces from Azerbaijani territory.

Hamid al-Ghabid stated that the new world order shapes us economically and politically and creates the minimum conditions required for a free and amicable existence. He stressed the need to broaden economic cooperation among Islamic countries and said: Permanent committees have been set up in the fields of economics, trade, science, and technology to foster solidarity among the member countries.

The ICO secretary general also called for signing a memorandum of understanding between the ICO and the ECO to promote more cooperation among the Islamic peoples.

On the sidelines of the ECO ministerial session, Hamid al-Ghabid also met Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati and discussed the problems of the Islamic world, ways and means to expand and boost cooperation among Islamic countries, and cooperation between the ECO and ICO as well as other topics of mutual interest.

At the session, the ICO secretary general said he was pleased with his talks meeting President Hashemi-Rafsanjani yesterday and described his suggestions to strengthen the bases of the ICO as extremely valuable and constructive.

Dr. Velayati said he hoped the extent of cooperation between the ICO and ECO would expand further. Various regional issues such as Afghanistan were also discussed at the meeting.

Further on al-Ghabid-Velayati Talks

LD2701103694 Tehran IRNA in English 0656 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran; Jan. 27, IRNA—Major developments in the world of Islam and ways to strengthen cooperation among Islamic countries were discussed by secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Hamid al-Ghabid and Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a meeting here Wednesday [26 January].

Cooperation between the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the OIC were among other topics over which the two sides exchanged views.

Turning to his meeting with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, earlier on the day, al-Ghabid welcomed the

president's proposal on further strengthening of the OIC and expansion of cooperation among Muslim countries.

Al-Ghabid, here for the fourth session of ECO foreign ministers which concluded work early Thursday morning, hoped that an agreement on cooperation between the two organizations would be signed soon.

The two sides voiced concern over the continuation of war in Afghanistan and massacre of Muslim people there and exchanged views on ways to stop the ongoing fratricide.

The two officials underlined the needs for the restoration of stability and peace to Afghanistan through peaceful ways.

Elaborating on measures Iran has so far taken to stop the bloodshed in Afghanistan, Velayati voiced Iran's readiness for further efforts to establish a just peace in that country.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Calls Mubarak; Israeli-PLO Talks Reported

NC2601171194 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1600 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat today telephoned President Muhammad Husni Mubarak from his residence in the al-Andalus Palace in Heliopolis. The Palestinian president informed Mubarak of the results of his meeting and talks today with an Israeli delegation headed by Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, who is in Cairo.

Palestinian sources said that during the phone call, the Palestinian president praised Egypt's major role in bringing Palestinian and Israeli viewpoints closer. 'Arafat described Egypt's efforts as painstaking. He noted President Mubarak's contacts with all the parties concerned with the peace process.

The Palestinian delegation headed by PLO Economic Department chief Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-al-'Ala', and the Israeli delegation headed by Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir held a third working session in Cairo this afternoon. Official Palestinian sources in Cairo said the two sides continued to discuss Palestinian and Israeli proposals to reach a compromise on implementing the Gaza-Jericho First agreement and also discussed implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles on self-rule in letter and spirit.

The two sides held two working sessions last night and this morning during which they exchanged working papers on implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

'Arafat's Saudi Visit Seen 'Rebuilding' Bridges

TA2601183994 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 26 Jan 94 p 11

[Editorial: A Step Toward Clearing the Arab Climate"]

[Text] The visit by Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat to Saudi Arabia and his talks with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz represent a positive step toward rebuilding the bridges between the PLO and the Gulf states. This, after the deterioration in Palestinian-Gulf relations in the aftermath of the second Gulf war and the subsequent inter-Arab rifts as a whole.

Undoubtedly, any effort toward clearing the Arab climate and restoring its harmony and serenity is now more necessary than ever. If the Gulf war was a black cloud in the Arab nation's history and a negative development in relations between brothers, insistence on maintaining that dark and painful chapter and keeping the wound of fraternal Arab relations bleeding will benefit no one but the adversaries of this nation and those who try to exploit differences and crises to achieve gains and goals at the expense of all the Arabs.

The hope is that Palestinian-Saudi relations in particular, and Palestinian-Gulf relations in general, will be elevated to their well-known level, even if in stages. Those states were—and it is hoped they will remain in the future—supporters of the Palestinian cause. It is a cause which the Arabs believed was above Arab differences and disputes and a reason for unity not discord, convergence not divergence.

The Palestinian people have proceeded on the road to peace and are now passing through a difficult stage in the negotiations for implementing the interim agreement. Many foreign parties have declared their support for the Palestinian people's efforts in building their entity, institutions, and infrastructure. The Arab brothers everywhere are called upon to play an active role in this sphere. Not only the Palestinians but the entire world expects them to do so.

Certainly, the supreme Arab interest requires one to forget the rancors, sensitivities, and pains and to develop a positive pattern of relations between the various Arab states based on cooperation and mutual respect. This is what the Palestinian cause requires at these delicate circumstances through which it is passing. Moreover, this will represent a great achievement on the pan-Arab level following the collapse and decline witnessed by the Arabs during the past years.

Editorial Assails Kuwaiti Allegations on Embassy

PM2601164694 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 26 Jan 94 p 11

[Editorial: "Skulls at Palestinian Embassy in Kuwait"]

[Text] Arab reconciliation efforts are making tangible progress at more than one level. The most distinguished

proof is Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's visit to the Saudi capital and the reception accorded to him at the highest level. But it seems that Kuwait—through its officials—continues to insist on swimming against the tide and working to obstruct any Arab rapprochement directly or indirectly in order to perpetuate the disputes and splits if possible.

Two days ago the Interior Ministry revealed that it had found weapons and skulls inside the Palestinian embassy in Kuwait after fabricating illogical reasons for storming it, violating all known diplomatic conventions.

We do not know how the Palestinian embassy has turned into an arsenal of weapons and a warehouse of skulls. Even if these skulls do really exist, what is strange about it, given that almost every house in Kuwait is armed to the teeth with machine guns, rockets, and heavy artillery, as announced by the Interior Ministry itself during its combing campaigns designed to seize arms after its continued appeal to urge citizens to hand them over failed.

The presence of a firearm in an Arab embassy is not a strange or odd thing. It is a rule pursued in most countries, and no diplomatic bag lacks arms. The Kuwaiti Government knows there is a personal weapon with the ambassador of the state of Palestine in Kuwait and elsewhere. It also knows that other embassies have weapons, whether before or after the invasion.

The question is about the use and purpose of these weapons, not about their presence. If these weapons had really been used against Kuwait's security and stability, thousands of Palestinians would not have been expelled in a humiliating way from Kuwait. Nor would Palestinian women have been raped by Kuwaitis in broad daylight and in front of their families.

One of the main criticisms aimed against the PLO and its leaders in a recent Palestine National Council session was its failure to distribute arms to the Palestinians living in Kuwait to enable them to defend themselves against the storming operations conducted by government militias. Its reply was that if it had done so, Kuwait would have turned into a blood bath—which it does not want to happen to anyone, neither to Kuwait nor to the Palestinians.

It is regrettable for Kuwaiti Government officials to speak about the existence of skulls in Palestine's embassy and announce this serious discovery on the day the Palestinian president's visit to Riyadh was due to take place. We do not know how these skulls reached the embassy building. If these skulls really exist, they are definitely the skulls of innocent Palestinians who sought refuge in their country's embassy but were later killed by the bullets of the Kuwaitis who had pursued them at the height of their spite against anything Palestinian—the spite which dominated Kuwait after the Iraqi forces were moved out of it.

What is clear is that the Palestinians did not kill a single Kuwaiti. Actually they were often the victims. Amnesty International reports and television pictures taken by Western reporters are full of images of mass graves for the victims killed by Kuwaiti government militias.

Some Kuwaiti officials are mistaken if they think that by these lies they can obstruct Arab reconciliation. They know that this reconciliation is not in their interests. They cannot obstruct history's movement, nor can they freeze it at a certain point. Second, such an approach—if it continues—will lead to further isolation for Kuwait at the Arab level, and perhaps at the Gulf level as well. Proof of this is that some Kuwaiti writers have urged that reconciliation should be achieved with some of the states which supported Iraq, naming Yemen and Tunisia, for example.

Kuwait needs a voice of reason to ease the tension with the brothers and lead to new pages, which do not all have to be positive; it is sufficient for them not to be negative. This is because the continuation of hostility is not in the interests of Kuwait or its people, whether this hostility is toward the Palestinians or anyone else.

PFLP Reportedly To Move Some Offices to Baghdad

JN2701085594 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 26 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Well-informed Palestinian sources have disclosed that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], led by Dr. George Habash, is preparing to transfer some of its offices and cadres from Damascus to Baghdad.

These sources added that PFLP Assistant Secretary General Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri] had already visited Baghdad for this purpose and discussed this issue with the Iraqi officials.

Algeria

Military Appoints Lamine Zeroual President

JN2701122494 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Dispatch by Qusayy Salih al-Darwish from Algiers]

[Excerpt] We have learned from reliable sources that the military command decided late last night to appoint Defense Minister Retired Major General Lamine Zeroual as president of the republic. The Higher Council for Security is expected to meet this afternoon to endorse the military command's decision. [passage omitted]

National Dialogue Conference Final Session

Political Resolution Issued

LD2601210594 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Here now is the text of a political resolution which has just been approved by the national conference: [video shows unidentified participant in the conference reading the resolution]

[Participant] [Words indistinct] to resolve the many-sided crisis in our country, out of their conviction that a solution to this crisis requires the mobilization of all in order to give substance to a national consensus, and out of their conviction that this consensus must be based on three fundamental terms of reference which are: The 1 November 1954 statement, the Constitution, and the platform for national consensus approved by the national conference.

The participants approved and call for the following:

1. Preserving and strengthening national unity.
2. Respecting the republican and democratic character of the state.
3. Respecting the principles of Islam as the religion of the Algerian state, the pillar of society, and the basis of the personality of the Algerian people.
4. Respecting the Arabic language and promoting it as the official national language of the Algerian nation.
5. Entrenching a multiparty system as a means of political organization and expression, and as a framework within which power changes hands.
6. Respecting public liberties, both individual and collective, and promoting and entrenching them in accordance with the constitution.
7. Respecting the Thamazighth language and promoting it as an indivisible part of the national identity alongside Islam and pan-Arabism.
8. Shunning violence as a means of political expression or as a means of arriving at or staying in power.
9. Refraining from the use of religion for partisan propaganda.
10. Refraining from the use of state equipment, official establishments, and places of worship for partisan propaganda.

The national conference hails the efforts of the National Dialogue Commission aimed at bringing the Algerian people together in order to overcome the crisis from which the country is suffering. All of these efforts have been crowned with the timely convening of the national conference on consensus.

The national conference calls on the authorities in charge of administering the transitional period to continue the dialogue and to establish it among all the political, economic, and social sides in order to achieve civil peace and for the recovery of stability, security, and reassurance, to achieve economic revival and consolidate the state institutions so as to prepare a suitable climate for a return to the electoral process.

Thanks to you all and may God bless you. [applause].

Draft Platform Put to Vote

LD2601194494 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] [Announcer] The national conference of consensus concludes this evening at the Palais des Nations after two days of proceedings. The final session is under way. More details from our correspondents at the Palais des Nations:

[Correspondent] Dear listeners everywhere, God's peace and mercy be upon you. As you heard, we are now following the final session of the national conference of consensus. The main event of this session is the report being presented by the rapporteur of the committee in charge of drafting the platform of national dialogue. One of the most important points of this report thus far is that the committee has reached a number of decisions. First of all, with regard to the article pertaining to the appointment of the presidential body [Article Six], the committee kept the version of the original text which stipulates that it is the Higher Security Council which appoints the head of the presidential body. The latter can appoint one or two deputies. The two deputies will assist the head of state in the tasks which he entrusts them with. So as I have said, the head of state will be appointed by the Higher Security Council.

As regards Article 27 pertaining to the Transitional National Assembly [al-majlis al-watani al-intiqali], the committee in charge of drafting the platform proposes to increase the number of seats from 180 to 200. These seats will be divided according to the following percentages: 15 percent of the seats will be reserved for representatives of state bodies, and the remaining 75 percent will be equally divided among the political parties, associations, economic organizations, and other organizations.

The installation of the Transitional National Assembly will take place three months after the latter has been

formed. It has also been decided to abolish the board of censorship since nothing justifies its existence, the document says.

Another article in the document stipulates that the head of state can rule by decrees in the period between his appointment and the appointment of the transitional national assembly. In other words, the period between the two appointments has not been fixed.

The political resolution says that actions and measures have to be taken in order of priority with a view to ending the political crisis. This resolution adds that the end of the political crisis will inevitably have to go through the electoral process, but there are other actions which must be undertaken and other conditions which must be met in the economic, social, and security fields. The resolution further says that the constitution remains in all circumstances the legal framework of the transitional period. But, the resolution adds, the constitution cannot be implemented in full since, for example, it will be impossible to hold elections soon. However, emphasis was put on the need to return to the electoral process as soon as possible and also on the need to amend some laws during the transitional period, such as the electoral code, the law on political parties, and the information code. This point was in fact included in the original text of the draft platform.

[Announcer] Rachid Benhmimid, we give you back the line to follow the rest of the statement read out by the rapporteur of the committee in charge of drafting the document and also the proposals made by the committee to the national conference which is meeting at this very moment. These proposals will be put to the vote very shortly.

Security Council To Appoint Head of State

LD2601215894 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1933 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Report on national conference by unidentified correspondent]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] One of the main points of the document endorsed by the national conference is that the head of state will be appointed by the Higher Security Council. Let us now talk about other important articles in the document that still concern the presidential body.

Article 8 says that the head of state will be sworn in before the higher institutions of the nation, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 72 and 73 of the Constitution. The head of state will have to declare his commitment to devoting himself to the implementation of the contents of this document.

Article 9 says that the duty of the head of state is incompatible with the exercise of any public or private functions, even if they were electoral. [sentence as heard] This duty is also incompatible with any responsibility within a political party or association.

The other important article concerns the powers and prerogatives of the head of state. These remain almost as they appear in the Constitution: He is the supreme commander of all the Armed Forces of the republic; he is in charge of national defense; he decides and steers the country's foreign policy; he chairs the Council of Ministers [the prime minister chairs the council of government]; he appoints and dismisses the head of government—this is also a very important point—he signs presidential decrees and appoints people to civilian and military posts in the state apparatus, and so on.

The other article that has been heavily amended concerns the transitional National Assembly. The participants have unanimously endorsed these amendments, particularly with regard to the membership and number of seats. Thus, the number of seats in the transitional National Assembly has been increased from 180 to 200. These seats will be divided among the groups that had been invited to the national conference of consensus according to the following proportions: 15 percent will be reserved for representatives of state institutions and the remaining 75 percent [as heard] will be equally divided among the political parties and the other social forces, including associations and economic organizations. The installation of the transitional National Assembly will take place within three months. I apologize for my mistake: I meant the remaining 85 percent.

[Announcer] There is also the issue of the commitments, which had appeared in the preliminary documents and which now seem to have been changed into "the general policy resolution."

[Correspondent] Yes, these commitments, as they had appeared in the text of the document, have been incorporated into a general policy resolution. Among these commitments, which have now appeared in a general policy resolution, the participants pledge and call for the preservation and consolidation of national unity, by respecting the republican and democratic character of the state; respecting the principles of Islam, which is the religion of the Algerian state, the pillar of society, and the basis of the personality of the Algerian people; respecting the Arabic language and promoting it since it is the national and official language of the Algerian nation; entrenching multiparty politics as a method of organization and political expression and a framework for alternating power; respecting individual and collective liberties and promoting and consecrating these liberties; respecting the Amazighi [Berber language and culture] and promoting it since it is an integral part of the national identity, alongside Islam and Arabism; rejecting violence as a means of political expression or a means to come to power or stay in power; refraining from using religion for party propaganda purposes; and refraining from using state resources, official institutions, and places of worship for party purposes.

These commitments have remained almost as they were. The only change is that they have been removed from the

text of the document, i.e. the document on national consensus, to be incorporated into a general policy resolution.

I would like to remind the listeners that the parties that boycotted the conference have boycotted it because they have declared their readiness to contribute and take part in the dialogue which, they are saying, will be starting soon. This dialogue is supposed to really start at the beginning of the transition period, according to the resolution issued by this conference.

As regards the parties that initially took part and later pulled out, they have said that they will participate in the dialogue when it starts. However, in the light of the changes introduced to the presidential body, public opinion would like to know who the next head of state is going to be. The amendment introduced to the presidential body is somewhat an indication. But the question remains very important and public opinion is waiting for a reply because time is running out and the end of the month is near [when the term of office of the Higher State Council ends]. [passage omitted]

Khatib Thanks Participants, Closes Conference

LD2601210394 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Closing speech by Youcef Khatib, chairman of the National Dialogue Commission, at National Conference in Club des Pins, Algiers, on 26 January—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate: Brothers and sisters, here we are now after two days' work reaching the end of this national conference. First of all I thank all the brothers and sisters for the patriotic spirit they have shown and I thank you for enabling this conference to approve the platform for national consensus which we consider to be in fact a program of action which can be adopted during the transitional period.

We consider that this platform which has been approved today is in reality the result of a collective endeavor in which all the quarters which have worked with the National Dialogue Commission have participated, regardless of whether they participated in the conference, boycotted it, or withdrew from it.

Since it was set up, the Commission has tried with all its force to secure the participation of all parties in the dialogue and not to exclude anybody apart from the party which excludes itself. Also from the outset, it has endeavored and made all efforts to bring views closer, to get everybody to work with all sincerity toward implementing the contents of the platform for national consensus, and for all to try to give priority to the supreme interest of the nation so that Algeria can get out of the crisis from which it is suffering as soon as possible.

Brothers and sisters, we call on all members of Algerian society to show a patriotic spirit and wisdom and place Algeria's interest above any other consideration. I will not miss the opportunity also to thank all the brothers and sisters who have worked assiduously in preparing this conference.

May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you. [applause]

I officially announce the end of the conference. [National anthem played]

Kafi on National Conference, Violence

NC2601152594 London MBC Television in Arabic 2145 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Interview with Higher State Council Chairman Ali Kafi by Hasan Zaytuni in Algiers; date not given; from the "Face-to-Face" program]

[Text] [Zaytuni] Mr. Chairman Ali Kafi, welcome to the MBC television center. We thank you for agreeing to give this interview which, as you know, coincides with Algeria's and the Algerians' preparations for the national conference on dialogue to find a way out of Algeria's crisis. Mr. Chairman, can you talk about the hopes that the Algerian leadership is pinning on this conference?

[Kafi] Thank you. First, I in my turn thank the MBC for this interest in Algeria and its problems. Thank you. Regarding your question, I and everyone who follows up on the developments in Algeria believe that a qualitative change could have happened had this crisis not taken place. Viewers and all those who watch your programs should be given the full picture of Algeria before the present stage, that is, from 1962 until 1988 when a popular uprising took place that filled the streets all over Algeria. The leadership at the time came to the conclusion that it was necessary to review the Constitution. Political pluralism was approved because it was one party rule. From that time on, Algeria began to deal with this new concept of organizing the political and social life of the country. Parties began to be established very quickly and 62 or 63 parties were set up. Between 1989 and December 1991, legislative elections were organized. I believe that this was not enough time. That's one point. Second, the parties did not organize themselves. The administration was still fragile and could not act as it should in organizing the elections and we saw what happened following the 26 December elections.

When the results of the elections were announced, they were contested and were met with strong rejection. So there was a need for change. The Parliament had ended its term and the president of the Republic resigned. There was a vacuum. Naturally, we decided that the state should continue. So we formed the Higher State Council under the late brother Mohamed Boudiaf, may God have mercy on his soul. We drew up a plan to extricate the country from its crisis as quickly as possible. The task entrusted to the Higher State Council was@to carry out the duties for the remaining two years of the five-year term of the president. The Higher State Council was

formed under Boudiaf, who, after six months in power, was assassinated, as you know. I was chosen to replace him. I assumed power and we began our work to address the situation because we found out that the three pillars on which the state was built were in a state of collapse. We found that the state was in a shambles, the economy was collapsing, and that Algerian society was in total disarray from lack of confidence resulting from the accumulation of previous mistakes.

[Zaytuni] Mr. President, regarding the idea of dialogue, certain parties, particularly the National Liberation Front [FLN] and the Socialist Forces Front, have boycotted the National Conference. Will this boycott affect the results of the conference or will it continue, even if these parties and others fail to participate?

[Kafi] Before answering this question directly, I would like to say that in September 1992 we endorsed the policy of dialogue with all political parties, economic and social partners, and other confederal committees concerned with these tasks, such as the Mojahedin Organization, the Martyrs' Sons Organization, and the Farmers Union, etc. These are large, important pillars in the country.

We adopted the policy of dialogue and embarked on a first round, a second, and a third round from which we emerged with the document in June 1993, a document called the basis for national dialogue. All the parties responded. We prepared a complete file on what took place at these stages of dialogue and based on these replies and this basis. Then we heard and sensed from some statements by various parties that we should negotiate or have a dialogue with the army, and so on. We decided in the end that we should give another stimulus to the dialogue. Thus, we formed a national committee to be in charge of completing the dialogue in light of what took place in the previous rounds, and of the parties' replies. This began in September 1993 and has continued to this day, until after tomorrow, that is, Tuesday 25 January and 26 January, when the conference is slated to be held.

Regarding the second part of the question about the fronts, or the so-called three fronts, that is, the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], the FLN, and the Socialist Front of Ayet Ahmed. Before going into this, we have to mention that on 23 November 1993, the Higher Council decided that there must be a dialogue with Islamic figures [al-hasasiyat al-islamiyah] and the dialogue committee did in fact began contacts with the Islamic figures, both those outside and inside the detention camps. That is premature now [sentence as heard]. But with regard to the FLN and the Socialist Front, it appears that these fronts had concluded a power-sharing agreement before the December elections. Therefore, we see now that they do not want to participate in the dialogue, in the national conference, because they appear to already have an agreement and want to put the authority in a tight situation.

As chairman of the Higher State Council, I personally wish and hope that they return to reason because the issue is not one of maneuvers at present. It is the issue of crisis. We did not hide this fact and said that it is a political crisis that has to be dealt with politically, that political solutions must be found for it, and that it is our hope to save the country from this crisis once and for all so that it will not recur after two, five, or 10 years. Therefore, when we opted for dialogue with all the partners, it was not a [word indistinct] but a strategic one. The objective is: first, to end the crisis in the country; second, to get the parties used to discussing with each other the country's affairs through dialogue and not through violence. Somebody might say that if these fronts do not attend the conference, then the dialogue would not have the desired importance. I reply that public opinion will be the judge. Are these fronts present in the field and do they control it or not? I say that Algerian society comprises a large number of parties and organizations and it is watching these parties' conduct and these parties' losses will be great because public opinion and history will judge them. That is why I hope that they will not place themselves before the court of history.

[Zaytuni] Let us turn to the expression political families, which you mentioned in your speech yesterday. I very much liked the phrase because it reflects the nature of Algerian society, whose ethics reject violence and unethical practices, whether those carried out by some quarters in the Algerian streets such as political assassinations or by the authority's official stand vis-a-vis these quarters, such as the arrests at the detention camps in the desert. All these acts, be they torture or assassinations, do not conform to the ethics of Algerian society. The phrase political families reflects your position regarding party plurality in Algeria. You welcome pluralism, provided it serves the country.

[Kafi] This is a many-sided question. I mentioned the phrase political families at a meeting with strugglers yesterday. We said let us meet with all parties that have similar views so that we can seek real solutions for getting the country out of the crisis. Thus, we extended-....[sentence incomplete as heard]. I talked about this yesterday. Before we started the dialogue, the parties themselves were alienated from each other and were not in the habit of sitting down together to discuss national issues in a rational, calm, and methodical manner. So we got them used to sitting down together, and this is what I referred to yesterday as a major gain, because such alienation does not allow us to reach the desired solutions. So, when the parties got together, talked together, and exchanged opinions and counter opinions, this is the essence of democracy. We must sit down together and exchange views. Before, people used to hear about each other's views and each party refused the other's views. But when we meet, we may find something in common, particularly if your goal and mine regarding the national cause is sincere. This is what is talked about. As for the phenomenon of violence, it is true that it is alien to us. It

does not belong to the Algerian society, nor does it belong to the Arab Maghreb community, as you know. This phenomenon is alien to our society, as I have previously mentioned in several speeches and even in my dialogue with the partners. This in fact is what is described as the Afghan phenomenon. In brief, in the 1948 war the Algerians went on foot to Palestine, where they saw the war there. When they heard about the Afghan people and watched the Jamal al-Din al-Afghani [19 Century political struggler in Egypt of Afghan origin] series on television—as you know Algerians follow the news of great men in the Arab and Islamic worlds—they went and volunteered. They [not further specified] picked them up from several areas—some went to London and several other areas. After that, they all met in Peshawar, where they received advanced military training and joined the battle alongside the Afghan mojahedin against communism, at that time. When the communist bloc and the Soviet Union collapsed and the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan, the people who were supervising these groups let them go. Each one went his own way and started wreaking havoc in the world. Some of these groups are present here in Algeria. [Words indistinct] in Afghanistan and took part in the war in Afghanistan. Now, it is wreaking havoc here in Algeria, something which is truly alien to our society, our traditions, our upbringing, and the makeup of Algerian society. Thus, we believe that is an alien phenomenon.

[Zaytuni] There is one point, Mr. Chairman. The people who have practiced and have chosen violence justify this by referring to the suspension of what is termed the election process and say that they had won the elections but the authorities prevented them from taking over. They have an argument with which to justify their actions. How do you view this argument?

[Kafi] I do not talk about arguments. A person involved in politics has to behave politically. Violence must be rejected. They can attain power but not through violence. It is wrong for anyone to use violence because the election process was halted. It is wrong because, as I said before, one can contest the results. The elections were neither honest nor clean and the administration was weak and could not manage the elections and their process. But this cannot be used as an excuse to carry weapons against the society to which one belongs. Therefore, those who want to attain power—and every party has this ambition to attain power.... [changes thought] But does one attain power with a program or with a gun? If with a program, then all the people and public opinion will be the judge. But with a gun, the people and public opinion could go along with you out of fear and not out of conviction. This argument is wrong. The dialogue within Algerian society, within the political family, must be political and calm.

[Zaytuni] Mr. Chairman, let us leave the Algerian crisis after this superb analysis and touch on Algeria's foreign relations. Algeria will take over the chairmanship of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] at the beginning of next month. What issues or aspects will Algeria focus on achieving as chairman of this union, which appears to be suffering from some sort of stagnation?

[Kafi] To say that the AMU is suffering from stagnation is correct. We wanted to deal with this situation and activate the member countries' dealings, both collectively and bilaterally, at the summit held in Nouakchott, Mauritania. But the number of those who attended it was insufficient. Morocco was represented by the prime minister and Libya by an ambassador. That was a summit. If we want to give substance to this union, then attendance must be at the required level. There are also some problems that could at present be an obstacle to progress and to what our peoples want from this union.

The AMU must be moved to the position it deserves because all the other partners are waiting for this. When we draw a clearly defined strategy, then we would most certainly find a response and a desire for cooperation from others on an equal footing. But if each one continues to act unilaterally and uses the AMU just as a cover or an excuse but refrains from moving forward with it, then we would most certainly not attain the desired objective. Algeria is convinced of the collective action of the Arab Maghreb. The Algerian people, government, and establishments are convinced of this. We believe that the AMU is needed to strengthen the domestic situation in each country and to strengthen this union with these immense human, scientific, cultural, and economic strengths. There must be serious planning for this process. We cannot tolerate such a situation because of transient conditions that shake it and render it stagnant.

Algeria believes in this union and we hope that when it takes over the chairmanship it will work seriously with all the comrades to ensure the success of the union.

[Zaytuni] As a result of the rift in inter-Arab relations following the Gulf war, there are attempts to achieve inter-Arab reconciliation. What is Algeria's position on this issue?

[Kafi] Although my meetings with Arab officials are few, because of the circumstances in Algeria and the fact that I do not leave the country much, I did meet with many Arab brothers at various levels, such as the Tunisian president and Egyptian President Brother Husni Mubarak in June and we touched on this issue. I even discussed this matter very frankly with Egyptian intellectuals during a seminar. We believe that the Gulf war happened and we should not say now who was wrong and who was right. It is something that happened in the past and caused a deep and wide rift among the Arab peoples and countries. We should go beyond this. Inter-Arab reconciliation is necessary if we are to place supreme Arab interests before other considerations. This is because the purpose of reconciliation is to close ranks, strengthen the negotiating power with the others, and bolster and deepen respect for the Arab world by others, particularly since we are going through a qualitative and unipolar world transitional period. All these factors

make it incumbent upon us to get together and reconcile, because our interest lies in getting together. For us in Algeria, the Arab and Islamic world provides depth for us, and Algeria provides depth for the Arab and Islamic world. The same is true for us and Africa. All this should make us draft a well-defined strategy for reconciliation. Each of the parties concerned could make a concession so long as the ultimate objective is to serve the supreme interests of the Arab nation.

[Zaytuni] Another issue in which Algeria has always played a pioneering role concerns Arab-Israeli peace as well as the Arab-Israeli conflict, which still exists. There are initiatives toward achieving some kind of peace between Israel and the Arab countries. How does Algeria view these current initiatives as well as the peace process in general?

[Kafi] Algeria has a clear-cut policy regarding this issue. This issue has two dimensions. The first concerns the land occupied by Israel during the 1967 war which is claimed by its owners. Egypt regained its land. Syria is now negotiating to regain its land. Our position on this is that we always side with our brothers. We took part in the 1967 and 1973 wars alongside our brothers in Egypt. The second dimension concerns the Palestinians. Algeria has made its opinion clear to the PLO and to Palestinian President Brother Yasir 'Arafat when he talked to us before going to Washington to sign the agreement. He came here (?25) days before the agreement and told us. We do not want to be more Palestinian than the Palestinians. We support the Palestinians in whatever they chooses for themselves. However, we gave them our opinion, which is the essence of our experience from the liberation war. Thus, Algeria is involved in current Arab issues, whether through the Arab League or bilateral contacts, and is also concerned with regard to the Palestinians. However, it cannot help but back the opinion of the Palestinian officials as far as these issues are concerned.

[Zaytuni] The last question, Mr. President, concerns you as president of the Republic. You assumed power under difficult security circumstances following tPe assassination of late President Mohamed Boudiaf, may God have mercy on his soul. Would you tell us about the most important decision you have made or position you have adopted during your term in office in the past two years?

[Kafi] In fact, There are a number of actions and, occasionally, decisions that I made. I believe that settling the border issue between Algeria and Tunisia once and for all is one of the most important achievements. This is an example for any country that has border disputes. In addition, as you know, the Algerian economy was in a shambles. We made decisions to address it. We decided to adopt a market economy. We replaced a guided economy with a free economy. However, this system is being implemented step by step because we had grown accustomed to a certain course of action and now we have moved to another. We expected reactions or shakeups and were prepared to address them, particularly social upheavals that concern us very much. Dialogue was not part of our behavior and so we decided to pursue a policy of continuing dialogue in Algerian society. This is a civilized landmark which, if we continue and meet with success, God willing, it will be a pioneering experiment.

[Zaytuni] Thank you very much, Mr. President. We wish you and Algeria success.

FIS Spokesman Kebir Rejects Dialogue

PM2701093494 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Jan 94 p5

[Interview with Rabeh Kebir, official spokesman of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], by Qusayy Salih al-Darwish in Cologne on 24 January]

[Excerpts] [Al-Darwish] How do you assess the current situation in Algeria?

[Kebir] The situation in Algeria today is really tragic because, as everyone knows, the Algerian people had elected their representatives and chosen their political program with complete freedom, the people agreed on their chosen representatives and moved toward forming a government to their liking after three years of paralysis, but regrettably a group of army commanders, generals, took an unsound course and repressed the people. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] What about the contacts made by the government with the FIS leaders?

[Kebir] The contacts made with the FIS leaders here and there, such as the contact we heard was made with Shaykh Abbasi Madani and other shaykhs, were, we have been informed, conditional. As if one would say I choose the people I want to talk to and on my own terms, and if they accept my terms and agree to do a number of things then I would hold a dialogue, etcetera. This attitude, of course, shows the regime's lack of seriousness. It also shows that the aim of bringing the parties together is to gain some credibility, strike at the people's resistance, and portray the newborn body that will succeed the Higher State Council as an acceptable one born out of reconciliation, and so on. The result of these unserious contacts is certainly rejection because the FIS leadership, whether at home or abroad, cannot accept such a thing and would not lend credibility to those people just because they held contacts and made attempts which clearly have the objective of maintaining the same domineering power.

[Al-Darwish] It has recently been reported that the FIS leaders have selected four of them to meet with the Dialogue Committee, hear its offers, and convey the FIS' views. Can you confirm or deny these reports?

[Kebir] As far as we are concerned these reports are not true and have not been confirmed. I believe that you have read Shaykh Ali Balhadj's message to the Dialogue Committee.

[Al-Darwish] But that was an old message which he wrote last November when he was in Tizi Ouzou prison.

[Kebir] That is true but it covered matters of principle. One cannot play games with such issues as the national dialogue or change his mind so easily. At any rate, so long as we hear nothing on that from our own sources, the report is untrue until the opposite is proven. What I can confirm is that the FIS leaders would never forfeit the Algerian people's rights.

[Al-Darwish] Is there any possibility of the FIS participating in the national conference directly or indirectly when it convenes tomorrow (Tuesday 25 Jan)?

[Kebir] I believe the FIS is not concerned with the conference in any way. I believe that such a dialogue on the regime's terms is a waste of time. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] Even if the dialogue is not as serious as you would like it to be, it has actually materialized on the ground and in the minds of the politicians. Most parties demand it as the only way out of the crisis, not to mention that many within the regime have adopted the idea. But you, and you personally in particular, have set extremely difficult conditions for dialogue with the regime. Do you believe that such intransigence will help end the Algerian crisis?

[Kebir] As far as I am concerned, the conditions were logical and were required legally and reasonably. It is not just a question of of the extraordinary courts set up illegally and unconstitionally nor a question of the creation of unconstitutional bodies. It has gone beyond that to mass murder without trial. For instance, over the past weeks in eastern Algeria, prisoners were taken handcuffed out of prison in trucks to a jungle near the town of el-Kelaa and, with people looking on, they were killed. This incident is known even to the national press. Such actions and their timing reflect the real views and ideas of the authorities. I cannot sit around the same table with those who kill the people. I say it frankly, they must be brought to justice with all the guarantees of justice.

[Al-Darwish] But that means that you are not setting coniditions but rejecting dialogue altogether. With whom is the dialogue to be held? With those currently in authority, naturally. If you are requesting dismissal and trial as a precondition, it means that you completely reject the principle of dialogue with the authorities?

[Kebir] No, that is not the case. We are not saying that everyone in authority has committed such criminal acts. Those who did commit and order these acts are known. They are a group of generals not exceeding a handful. They are the ones who should be brought to justice.

[Al-Darwish] You are talking as if you assume that there is an authority in Algeria other than the military authority and that it can bring the military command to trial. You know that everyone sees the current conflict in Algeria as a conflict between two powers: the Army and the FIS. When we talk about a dialogue to resolve Algeria's current crisis resulting from that conflict, we are in fact talking about a dialogue between the FIS and Army leaders.

[Kebir] I say that the Army should get rid of some criminal commanders and choose for itself some good men.

[Al-Darwish] Permit me to say once more that what you are saying means that you actually reject dialogue with the current authorities.

[Kebir] We reject dialogue with those who committed crimes against the people.

[Al-Darwish] So, according to you, the resolution of Algeria's current dangerous situation depends on the outcome of the armed confrontation?

[Kebir] The armed confrontation is not an end in itself. It has come to rid the country of the injustice that has occurred.

[Al-Darwish] But do you believe that the armed clash with the regime launched by the Islamic armed movement or other Islamic organizations can really bring the regime down?

[Kebir] I do not believe that military action can quickly anH decisively settle the issue in favor of one side or the other, but resistance against injustice will unltimately lead to change within the existing ruling authority itself. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] There are clear differences in the tones, arguments, and positions of the members of the Executive Committee abroad. I remind you, for instance, of the difference between your statement and Sahraoui's statement on the assassination of foreigners in Algeria.

[Kebir] When I talk I do so as FIS official spokesman and as the official in charge of the Executive Committee abroad. When others speak they give their own views and analysis. There is nothing wrong with having differences of opinion in one way or another within the context of general FIS policy.

[Al-Darwish] Did you form the Executive Committee abroad on your own initiative, the five of you, or on the basis of a decision by the FIS leadership at home?

[Kebir] It was a decision by the FIS, all of it.

[Al-Darwish] Are you really in contact with a legitimate organized leadership at home, one that meets and decides everything?

[Kebir] Certainly, there is coordination between the FIS leaderships at home and abroad. That coordination may increase or decrease according to circumstances but it is always there. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] At various stages since its foundation, the FIS has assumed that the Algerian Army would not contribute to the confrontation with it and that it would be divided within itself if it did join in that confrontation, but the Algerian Army is still noticeably the regime's only cohesive institution.

[Kebir] I believe that the forces used by the regime now do not really represent the Algerian Army in its popular dimension as we know it. They use specially brainwashed forces. I believe that some time is required before we can see the real results. If the Army continues to be used widely and extensively, we will see the results later on. There have been some results already. How many Army personnel have deserted and joined the mujahidin?

[Al-Darwish] Do you have a numerical estimate of the Army deserters?

[Kebir] It is difficult to give estimates but it is now widespread in all sectors of the country. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] Many observers do not understand your silent appeasement of the "Armed Islamic Groups" which have been fiercely attacking you and the FIS in their statements.

[Kebir] Regarding the statements issued by some criticizing the FIS, its program, or its men, it is impossible to verify or authenticate them because they are not signed by a known person. Who issues these statements? Who is he and what does he represent? So the possibility remains that the security authorities might be behind them. What we know is that the official leaderships of these groups inside Algeria do not adopt such positions. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] The Western media insists that the FIS has links with some Islamic states or receives various aid from them. The names of Iran, Sudan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan were mentioned. What aid and facilities does the FIS get from these states?

[Kebir] That claim is unfounded. We have said so frequently. It is as if those making such claims want to cast doubt on the Algerian people's support for the FIS. By God, I believe that a cause upheld by the people does not need aid from other states. [passage omitted]

[Al-Darwish] If the FIS' historical leaders, who are in prison, agreed on a dialogue with the regime, do you believe that they would be able to impose the idea of a dialogue and its possible consequences on the armed movements and on the FIS' current secret leadership structures?

[Kebir] What is certain is that the historical leadership of the FIS consisting of Shaykh Abbasi Madani and Shaykh Ali Balhadj is the real leadership of the FIS and is considered so by all of the FIS's groups and frameworks. The positions they take, therefore, are respected but that leadership knows that the sacrifices it made were made in rejection of injustice. I therefore believe that its position would be in line with the aspirations of the Algerian people.

[Al-Darwish] In other words, it would not accept the dialogue idea?

[Kebir] It cannot possibly accept a dialogue that would mean forfeiting the Algerian people's rights and overlooking the blood that has been spilled

[Al-Darwish] What do you think of the appointment of Abdelaziz Boutaflika as head of state?

[Kebir] Has he been appointed?

[Al-Darwish] It has been reported that he is on his way to being appointed.

[Kebir] As I have already said, the country's crisis was caused in particular by a group of generals. When the necessary conditions securing the Algerian people and their rights prevail, then we will be able to express an opinion.

[Al-Darwish] What is your personal opinion of and position regarding Boutaflika?

[Kebir] The problem in Algeria is now more than just a problem of individuals. Furthermore, what would the appointment of one individual mean if based on unsound foundations?

FIS Denies Plans To Participate in Conference

LD2701114194 Tehran IRNA in English 1034 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Athens, Jan. 27, IRNA—The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) has firmly denied reports saying that some FIS leaders were ready to participate in Algeria's national conference.

"FIS firmly denies what has been reported that some shuyukh (Islamic leaders) may perhaps represent the front in what is called the national conference and reaffirms that this conference is doomed to failure," said a FIS press release faxed to IRNA Wednesday [26 Jan] night.

The 2-day national conference ended Wednesday without reaching any decision on the political future of Algeria. The military-backed regime said the conference will convene to try to resolve the crisis.

The statement in Arabic, signed by FIS' exiled spokesman in Europe, Rabah Kebir, said the contacts between the regime and the jailed shuyukh were merely "discussions" and not a "dialogue", and he accused the military-backed regime of falsifying the facts.

Kebir, who lives in Germany, reiterated that FIS will not participate in any conference before all political prisoners are set free and their political freedom reestablished. Most opposition parties boycotted the conference.

The statement said FIS leader Shaykh Ali Belhadj, who began a hunger strike on December 4, was admitted to a military hospital in an unconscious state after 22 days.

After undergoing medical treatment for five days Belhadj was transferred to the military jail in Balida.

The FIS won a sweeping victory in the first-round in Algeria's first multi-party elections at the end of 1991, but the military-backed authorites scrapped the poll, banned the FIS and arrested thousands of Islamists.

The regime last week released hundreds of Islamists, but FIS said amnesty was not enough to justify opening a dialogue with the regime.

Egypt

'Arafat, Musa Evaluate Negotiations, Assess Contacts

NC2601205394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2005 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat met Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa at his residence in the al-Andalus Palace in Heliopolis tonight.

Responsible Palestinian sources in Cairo said the meeting focused on evaluating the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in Cairo and on the contacts aimed at advancing the peace process.

Attending the meeting on the Palestinian side were PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Economic Department head Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', Palestinian president's adviser Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal, and Fatah Movement representative in Egypt Zuhdi al-Qidrah.

The third session of the Palestinian-Israeli talks ended earlier this evening. Views were exchanged on contentious points delaying the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord and the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Weather Forces Cancellation of 'Arafat's Tunis Flight

NC2701061194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2300 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's flight from Cairo to Tunis was canceled tonight because of bad weather in Tunis.

'Arafat headed for Cairo Airport late tonight to fly to Tunis after a two-day visit to Egypt. But strong winds were reported around Tunis Airport that would delay the landing there. The trip was postponed until tomorrow morning.

Musa Leaves for Bilateral Meetings in Switzerland

NC2701074494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0637 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 27 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left Cairo this morning on his way to Geneva for a three-day visit to Switzerland.

Before his departure, he stated that during his visit he will hold talks with the Swiss foreign minister and ranking officials on how to bolster bilateral relations in various fields.

He added that after that, he will take part in the international economic forum that starts later today in Davos, Switzerland. The forum will discuss a number of international issues, foremost of which is the situation in the Middle East and Bosnia, and the effects of the GATT Treaty on Third World countries.

'Amr Musa said that during his visit he will hold contacts with the heads of the delegations participating in the international economic forum to discuss how to push Middle East peace efforts forward. He noted that he will meet with Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres as part of Egypt's efforts to give the Middle East peace process momentum and work on implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis.

He added that he will leave Switzerland on Sunday, 30 January, for Addis Ababa to head Egypt's delegation to the OAU foreign ministers meetings which start on Monday, 31 January.

Plot Against Israeli Diplomat Reportedly Uncovered

NC2701080994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Judicial officials in Egypt who are involved in indictment of a number of Muslim revolutionaries of that country announced that they have documentary evidence that indicates that the revolutionary Muslims had intended to kill the Zionist regime's ambassador in Cairo as well as nine Egyptian government officials. According to ASSOCIATED PRESS, these judicial officials stated yesterday that the Muslims who have been charged with trying to kill the Egyptian prime minister revealed 10 other names of people who had been targeted, including the Zionist regime's ambassador David Sultan, the Egyptian prosecutor general, some military judges, and the former chief of Egyptian intelligence.

The trial of the Egyptian revolutionaries, who number 15, has been postponed to 5 February.

Libya

Information Secretary Resigns From Position

LD2701024794 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Comment by 'Ali Musri al-Sha'iri, Secretary of the General People's Congress for Information and Culture, at a debate on the General People's Committee for Information and Culture; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] Praise be to God for the state of our people now as a result of the great 1 September revolution and its leader who is not interested in power and who has been leading the struggle for people to assume power; praise be to God that the people has become a master on this part of our Arab homeland and the world around us; praise be to God that the people has become awesome because it has the final say.

The questioning that is taking place in this hall is the pinnacle of the exercising of people's democracy. It is not aimed at individuals; it is aimed at assessing the performance of individuals and their commitment to the resolutions of basic people's congresses, their ability to implement them even under the most difficult circumstances and the extent of their ability to transform revolutionary instructions into practical plans to be implemented. [passage omitted: more on the people's right to choose officials; shouts slogans in praise of the revolution, people's authority and al-Qadhdhafi]

Undoubtedly, this gathering is full of cadres ['anasir] whom I believe to be more capable than myself and others to shoulder the responsibility for this sector, particularly at this phase in view of it being a frontline detachment in the battle of preaching and defending the great fatih [1 September] revolution; the revolution of the new civilization [interrupted by slogans; asks to be given a minute].

I leave this position for those who are more capable of assuming this duty. I stress that it would be death without the revolution and its leader and the people's authority. This is a pledge I will not betray, a promise I will not break, and a principle I will not deviate from as long as there is a drop of blood flowing in my veins. Forward and the revolutionary struggle continues. [passage omitted]

Government Official on Foreign Policy Decisions

LD2601174994 Tripoli JANA in English 1421 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Sirte, A'ina al-Nar [January] 26, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—'Umar al-Muntasir, the secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has said that the decisions taken by the basic people's committees relating to foreign policy were readily accepted despite the difficult political conditions which prevail in the world and the unjustly harsh blockade imposed on the Libyan people under the pretext of so- called "international legitimacy" which was exploited by the three Western countries for their own ends to undermine the great al-Fatih revolution.

In his response to the points concerning the matter of the Basic Peoples' Congresses yesterday evening, al-Muntasir said that the great al-Fatih revolution has the honour of confrontation and defiance to colonialist designs.

He said that attempts by the Western countries to undermine the Great Jamahiriyah had reached the degree of armed aggression against it and the bombing of the house of the leader of the revolution. When these countries failed in their attempts, they used the downing of a Pan Am airliner flight number 103 and a Uta airliner in another attempt to undermine the Great Jamahiriyah.

He said that at a time when the United States is in sole leading position over the world, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War, the Western powers used the Security Council and transformed the issue from a criminal one to a political one despite the fact that there is no evidence which shows that the Great Jamahiriyah is responsible for this act. He said that the Jamahiriyah attempted to seek a solution to this crisis, the need to find the truth, and to have a trial held in a neutral country but the three Western countries closed all the doors which shows that the main aim behind their actions is not to find the truth but to carry out their own political ends.

He added that the Great Jamahiriyah's stance in this crisis was well received and appreciated by more than two thirds of the countries of the world, including the countries of the Non Aligned Movement, the Islamic Conference Organisation, the Arab League and the Organisation of African Unity as well as several trade and other organisations, in addition to other countries.

This reflected itself in the Security Council when the vote was taken on three of the Western countries proposed resolutions and were extremely difficult to be approved, despite the strong pressure it applied and the threats and inducives [as received] it used.

On Debts Owed to Tripoli

LD2601182194 Tripoli JANA in English 1423 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Tripoli, Ay Annar [January] 26, JAMAHIRIYA NEWS AGENCY—In his response to the matter of the basic peoples congresses, 'Umar al-Muntasir, the secretary of the General Peoples Committee for Foreign Liaison and Interational Cooperation spoke on the subject of loans and trusts given to friendly countries saying

that they were 2,127 million and 842 thousand dollars, and 22 million french francs of which 947 million and 728 thousand dollars were payed back. He said that the total amount of loans due were a billion, 352 million and 58 thousand dollars as well as 22 million French francs.

He added that some countries had payed back their loans while several of these countries did not comply with their payment deadlines.

Morocco

King Hassan on 'Decentralization' of Authority

LD2601140794 Rabat MAP in English 1249 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Rabat, Jan. 26 (MAP)—"We will give decentralization a new meaning and the authority will no longer be concentrated in a given place but will be fairly divided throughout the Kingdom", King Hassan II said here Tuesday [25 Jan].

In an address he made after appointing new walis and governors in various wilayas, prefectures and provinces of Morocco and new governors at the central administration of the Ministry of State to the Interior, the sovereign underlined that the ministries will be accountable before the municipal and rural councils, as well as before the parliament in case of a delay in implementing projects.

"We have set up a committee gathering representatives of all central services, including engineers, physicians, teachers, farming engineers, magistrates and all the representatives of the administrative apparatus of the state", the sovereign added.

This committee will meet once a week to examine with the walis and governors all the topics submitted and to monitor the projects underway with a view to implementing them in the best conditions.

Sudan

Government Accuses Garang Over Closed Land Routes

EA2601211494 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The rebel movement—Garang's group—has refused to open new safe land corridors from Kenya and Uganda and internal land corridors in the south of the country to transfer relief supplies to the affected areas, though the government of Sudan had agreed to open land corridors and offered all concessions for transporting relief supplies to citizens.

A report by the SUDAN NEWS AGENCY from Nairobi said the Sudanese Embassy there issued a statement in which it held the rebel movement was responsible for the failure of the talks that were concluded in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, yesterday, and in which a government delegation, led by Dr. Ibrahim Abu Awf, minister of state at the ministry of social planning, and the special envoy of the UN secretary general for humanitarian affairs in Khartoum took part.

The statement pointed out that the relief talks failed because of the insistence of the rebel movement—Garang's group—on not opening the (Nadus)-Kapoeta-Torit road which feeds Kapoeta and Torit areas via the border area of (Nadus) from the Kenyan Lokichoggio where there are operation lifeline relief depots. The statement added that the Government of Sudan agreed to open a road from Uganda to feed all the west Equatoria area. It agreed to open a road from border (Nadus) area to feed areas of rebels also up to (Shabdum) and Jabal (Boma).

Kuwait

Military Delegation in Moscow To Buy APC's, Trucks

JN2701121394 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 22 Jan 94 pp 1, 21

[Report by Samir Yasin]

[Text] AL-WATAN has learned from informed military sources that a high-ranking Kuwaiti military delegation has arrived in Moscow from London to hold preliminary talks with the Russian military command. The talks, the sources added, will deal with some Russian military systems which Kuwait is interested in.

The Kuwaiti delegation comprises officers from the Ground Forces and the Navy. The sources noted that Kuwait is mainly interested in the Russian-made BMB2 armored personnel carrier [APC]. Kuwait, which has 40 of this type of carrier, wants to purchase 20 more in addition to 60 of the new generation BMB3 carrier.

The cost of the 20 carriers of the first type is estimated at between $25 and $30 million. Kuwait will also purchase trucks to be used in support missions.

Defense Minister on Plans of Accord With China

PM2701104494 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Jan 94 p5

[Unattributed report: "Kuwaiti Defense Minister Confirms Intention To Conclude Military Agreement with China"]

[Text] Kuwait, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah has confirmed that Kuwait intends to conclude a defense agreement with the Chinese Republic but denied any inclination to hold a similar agreement with Italy.

He said that the dialogue between the Kuwaiti and Chinese sides is continuing, in order to agree on a formula for a defense agreement, and expressed hope that the agreement will be concluded in the near future.

In a statement to reporters yesterday, Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah said that Kuwait's policy on security agreements confines them to the UN Security Council permanent member states to the exclusion of others. He added that Kuwait has no intention of concluding security agreements with any Arab state. He said: There are previous agreements in this connection such as the "Damascus Declaration" and the "Arab Joint Defense Pact" within the framework of the Arab League.

In reply to a question from AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, the Kuwaiti defense minister denied that joint Kuwaiti-Italian naval exercises were held with a view to concluding a security agreement with Italy.

Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah stressed that the Kuwaiti force in Somalia operating within the UN's UNOSOM-2 will continue to perform its humanitarian duties until the United Nations terminates its UNOSOM-2 operation in Somalia.

On the defense budget supplement for the Kuwaiti Army, left pending at the National Assembly since last year, Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah said that he "considers it to have been approved, having been passed by the National Assembly's Interior and Defense Affairs Committee."

In reply to a question about the body found in the Palestinian embassy building in Kuwait, the minister said that it has not been identified yet and that the investigations are continuing.

Paper Calls For Restoring Ties With Tunisia, Yemen

JN2601175594 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 24 Jan 94 pp 1, 23

[Editorial: "Normalization"]

[Text] Ever since countries in the region began to talk about normalizing relations with the Arab countries classified as Kuwait's opposers due to their known stand toward the wicked Iraqi aggression, Kuwait's stand began to fluctuate between a categorical rejection and an ambiguous acceptance of such normalization. It was finally decided to make normalization conditional on a commitment to the UN Security Council resolutions on the war for the liberation of Kuwait. This was considered an alternative to a public appology that necessarily meant an admission of being a real participant in the Iraqi crime of occupation. This was not the exact truth because these countries only adopted passive roles which the Iraqi regime utilized in order to serve its claims.

Some may say these countries' roles went beyond being just passive to taking the form of politcial and media support for the occupation crime. However, this was only the result of their being surprised and deceived when they all made a legend of Saddam Husayn. We all participated in portraying him as such, and perhaps we were the first to glorify the guardian of the Arab homeland's Eastern Gate who, in reality, was a monster in our midst.

Now that talk about normalization has stopped, the government has failed to take a tangible step toward those countries that responded to the Kuwaiti condition and unequivocally announced they support international resolutions, Kuwait's right to sovereignty, the return of prisoners, and the payment of compensations. Here, we mean Yemen and Tunisia, who have repeatedly recited the prayer of repentance after they started to see clearly and became aware of the Iraqi monster and the tragic effects the crime of occupation has had on the Arab world. What else is needed to overcome estrangement and restore normal relations?

We believe Kuwait is dutybound to extend its hand toward Tunisia and Yemen and for us to clear our hearts of feelings of blame in order to build, on the ruins of the

past, a firm foundation for strong ties that end estrangement and provide an opportunity for interaction among Arab efforts to tighten the siege on the rabid monster who is gritting his teeth in hatred. We ought to admit that we were the first to be decieved and the first to acclaim the "Arabs' knight". It is now time for us to wake up from our daze and seek the right way to rebuild what the wicked invasion had destroyed of the wall of our Arab relations. The thicker the wall the less the danger of the monster lurking behind the borders will be.

United Arab Emirates

Diplomat on Dispute With Iran Over Three Islands

PM2701094894 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Jan 94 pp1, 4

[Taj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haqq report: "Abu-Dhabi: Our Dispute Is Over Sovereignty, Not Borders"]

[Text] Abu-Dhabi—A high-ranking United Arab Emirates [UAE] diplomatic source has stated that "pending issues" is no longer an acceptable title for the dialogue with Iran on the three occupied UAE islands of Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu-Musa.

The UAE source said that the UAE had agreed to discuss its dispute with Iran over the three islands under the heading "pending issues" in order to "persuade Iran to discuss the question of its occupation of the three islands, but it then became evident that Iran was trying to use that label to keep the issue in flux and to dither."

The source said that Iranian Interior Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati's recent statements in Doha were unacceptable and part of the contradictory statements made by Iranian officials from time to time. The UAE source added that "the UAE's dispute with Iran over the three islands is not a dispute over borders but a dispute over sovereignty." He said the UAE had reservations about the conclusions reached at the Paris seminar on the islands held last summer.

The diplomatic source said that Iran's nonacceptance of direct dialogue on the three islands reflected the weakness of Iran's legal position on the issue of sovereignty over the islands. He said that "had Iran had any legal or historical documents, it would not have hesitated to agree to discuss the dispute directly or submit it to international legal bodies."

He emphasized that the weakness of the Iranian arguments was clear in the contacts and talks held on the dispute since the failed round of negotiations between the two countries in September 1992 in Abu-Dhabi.

The UAE source said that there are currently no contacts with Iran on the islands but added that the UAE has not lost all hope for the resumption of the negotiations. He noted in this connection that "the conflicting statements made by Iranian officials leave the door open for the resumption of the negotiations." He stressed that the UAE's options for raising the issue at international circles are still open and that its determination to fulfill its rights peacefully remains unchanged.

On the possibility of mediation on the dispute, he said that the UAE does not accept mediations and insists on frank and direct dialogue on the issue but he emphasized that it would not object to a delegation going to Tehran if there was a sincere intention to discuss the dispute over the three islands.

Iran Economic Ties Continue Despite Island Dispute

NC2601154694 Paris AFP in English 1310 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Report by Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Jan 26 (AFP)—The strong economic relationship between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Iran has remained intact despite worsening political ties due to a dispute over three strategic Gulf islands.

Official Iranian figures released at a regional exhibition in al-Shariqah showed the UAE has remained the top Gulf commercial partner of Iran, while Tehran's exports to the Emirates have even increased.

UAE exports and re-exports to Iran stood at around three billion dirhams (817 million dollars) in 1993 and imports at 800 million dirhams (218 million dollars), creating a surplus for the UAE of 599 million dollars. The figures were slightly higher than in 1992, when exports stood at around 800 million dollars and imports at 163 million dollars.

Most of Iran's imports from the UAE come from Dubai, the main commercial centre in the region. Hundreds of traders in Dubai are of Iranian origin, who assist businessmen from their country.

Most of the trade between the two countries is hauled by traditional Arabian wooden boats, dhows, hundreds of which ply the Gulf waters daily.

Iran's exports to the Emirates include mainly carpets, nuts and other foodstuffs while its imports include sugar, rice, cars and electronics.

Iranian businessmen said actual trade with the UAE was much higher as those figures do not include Iranian exports through the five free ports set up in the Emirates over the past few years.

Hundreds of Iranian boats converge on such ports loaded with home made products such as furniture, foodstuffs, clothes, home appliances, handicrafts and other light items. Trade through those ports, where the Iranians pay only token tariffs, is estimated at millions of dollars a month.

"Iran is an important commercial partner of our country as it takes nearly one third of our re-exports," a Dubai trade official said. "Its exports to us are also increasing

and most of them are being re-exported to other countries. Iran relies mainly on Dubai to reach other markets."

Iran and the UAE have been locked in a dispute over the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, which control the vital Hormuz Strait through which nearly one fifth of the world's crude exports pass.

But the dispute has not affected their ties in other sectors. More than 150,000 Iranians stil live in the UAE and Iran has even boosted its participating in trade fairs in Dubai, al-Shariqah and other UAE emirates.

Such participation is part of Iran's attempts to boost non-oil exports to offset a decline in crude prices and revive its economy, wrecked by accumulating debts and the 1980-1988 war with neighbouring Iraq.

The latest participation was in an Arab-Asian exhibition being held in al-Shariqah and Iranian officials have already reported deals worth more than 1.5 million dollars in addition to negotiations for more sales.

"Some of the 28 participating Iranian companies are also conducting contacts to find trade agents in the emirates," said Ibrahim Khodai, spokesman for the Iranian pavilion at the fair.

He said the items displayed at the Iranian pavilion were worth more than 140 million dollars and included handicrafts, home appliances, furniture, chemicals, carpets, farming equipment and electronics.

"Iran is considering expanding its presence at such exhibitions given the large demand for our products," he said.

Islamic Affairs Minister Receives Iranian Envoy

LD2601202794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to the United Arab Emirates met with that country's minister of Islamic affairs and awqaf today. During the meeting, the UAE minister called for the expansion of mutual ties between the two Islamic and neighboring countries and announced his country's readiness for any kind of cooperation.

The expansion of cultural relations and increasing of contacts between the two countries' Islamic institutions, foundations, and scholars and ways of cooperation at Islamic, regional and international sessions were also discussed.

Libya To Reopen Embassy 'in Next Few Months'

NC2601164394 Paris AFP in English 1530 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Jan 26 (AFP)—Libya has decided to reopen its embassy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) after a closure of nearly 10 years, diplomats said here Wednesday.

The embassy will open in the next few months but Libya has already named Muhammad al-Fayturi as its charge d'affaires in the Emirates.

The foreign ministry acting undersecretary, Sayf Sa'id, met al- Fayturi on Tuesday "after Libya decided to reopen its diplomatic mission here," the official UAE news agency WAM said.

Libya closed its embassy in the UAE and several other countries in the mid-1980s apparently because it wanted to cut overspending due to a decline in oil prices, an Arab diplomat said.

It was not clear what prompted the latest move since oil prices have stayed weak. But the decision coincides with Libya's dispute with the West over the 1988 Lockerbie plane bombing.

The Gulf states—oil producers like Libya—have good ties with Washington and London, which demand the hand-over of two Libyan suspects in the bombing over the Scottish village of Lockerbie that cost 270 lives.

Yemen

Salih, al-Bid Reportedly To Meet in Amman in Feb

JN2701101994 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 27 Jan 94 p 22

[Salih al-Qallab dispatch from Sanaa]

[Excerpt] The time factor has been settled and it is all but definite that the reconciliation meeting between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid will be held in Amman in the first week of next month, February. AL-DUSTUR has learned that the follow-up committee in charge of preparing for this meeting has asked the leaders of parties and national forces that will take part in this celebration to get ready for departure to Amman next Sunday.

In the meantime, Yemeni Parliament Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar is still dissatisfied with the way the document of understanding was issued. He insists that this document, which was initialed on 18 January, should be ratified by the House of Representatives, which is the constitutional body in the country.

The Yemeni parties are engaged in controversy over the point advanced by al-Ahmar. A bloc comprising the Yemeni Socialist Party, the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, the Right [al-Haqq] Party, and the Nasirite Popular Unionist Organization has emerged. It says that, based on past experience, what the House speaker is demanding is unnecessary. These parties, supported by many independents, do not believe the new document should pass through parliament. They say that none of the previous unity accords was ratified by the House of Representatives and that the new document is a covenant of honor and not a legal pact. [passage omitted]

Khudayyir Receives Jordanian Transport Minister

JN2601161594 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir has received Jordan's Transport Minister Adib Halasah. Khudayyir observed to him that Iraq and Jordan are bound by deep ties of brotherhood. Their cooperation in the transportation industry has come a long way and will grow deeper still, the prime minister said. Khudayyir stated his satisfaction with the status of cooperation in transportation between the two brotherly countries and Iraq's preparedness to assist Jordan in this and other areas. Transportation, he noted, is a significant element that must be factored into national development plans. The Jordanian minister said he will do all he can to advance bilateral cooperation in transportation and to prepare for the post-sanctions era, which he predicted will see relations gain strength.

The meeting was attended by Iraq's Transport and Communications Minister Ahmad Murtada Ahmad; Hamid Salih al-Rawi, head of the Cabinet secretariat; and the Jordanian ambassador in Baghdad.

Transportation Talks Begin

JN2601185094 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] The 27th meetings of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors of the Iraqi-Jordanian Overland Transportation Company began at the Ministry of Transport and Communications today. The session was chaired by Ahmad Murtada Ahmad, Iraq's minister of transport and communications. Jordan's Transport Minister Adib Halasah attended the meeting.

Ahmad Murtada Ahmad underlined the importance of cooperation between the two brotherly countries, particularly in the transporation area. He commended the Jordanian government and people for supporting Iraq as it puts up heroic resistance to imperialist and Zionist schemes and for the way it is coping with the wicked blockade.

The Jordanian minister said the Iraqi government and people were conducting themselves heroically in the face of a wicked blockade. Iraq, he added, has foiled all imperialist schemes designed to hurt the Iraqi people. Keeping the iniquitous sanctions in place is legally invalid and [words indistinct], the Jordanian minister said.

Government Denies Chemicals Shipment Allegations

JN2601213394 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2050 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Jan (INA)—The Foreign Ministry tonight categorically dismissed western and American news media allegations of chemicals used in the manufacture of fuels for missiles being found aboard a German ship docking in Saudi Arabia. Following is the text of the statement:

Western and American news media have attributed a statement to Dieter Vogel, a German government official, in which he said that German intelligence services have had access to information from Saudi Arabia to the effect that a search of a German freighter, docked at the Port of Jeddah, by Saudi and German inspectors on 28 December 1993 turned up two containers including hundreds of tonnes of a chemical stuff, used in the manufacture of fuels for missiles.

The statement added that this ship had transported chemicals from China and then unloaded part of its freight in Hong Kong. The vessel's travel plan called for it to dock in Cyprus before proceeding to Beirut, its final destination. The German official then claimed that the chemicals consignment was to have been transported from Beirut to Iraq.

The Foreign Ministry hereby categorically denies these allegations. The fabrication of lies has become a hackneyed tactic resorted to by certain quarters known for their hostility toward Iraq and the Iraqi people, among them the Saudi regime. The idea is to level baseless accusations against Iraq, spread lies, and cast doubt with the object of keeping the wicked blockade in place. This is because more and more circles and nations within and outside the UN Security Council are demanding the removal of the blockade.

The Foreign Ministry hereby condemns these groundless allegations and the role of the guileful Saudi regime in making up such lies.

SAIRI Leader Hakim Calls For UN Observers in South

NC2601185394 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], has reaffirmed the need to deploy UN observers in southern Iraq to prevent the regime from using heavy weapons against the civilians and to supervise the aid programs there.

In an interview with the Austrian Broadcasting Company, al-Hakim also affirmed the need to send observers and inspection teams to investigate conditions inside prisons and detention centers, and issues connected with human rights in Iraq.

Referring to the deteriorating conditions in the southern marshlands that the regime is draining, al-Hakim said returning life to normal in these areas has become an urgent need, stressing that the United Nations must open gaps in the huge earthen dams that the regime has built

to cut off water to the region. All indications are that these dams are meant to kill the people and destroy their livelihood.

Al-Hakim stressed that these areas are witnessing tragic conditions. The regime has imposed an economic blockade on them, preventing food and medical supplies from reaching the inhabitants. The regime is also draining the marshlands, forcing the inhabitants to emigrate en masse to Iran and to other areas in Iraq.

Al-Hakim said the regime has not been content with these measures. It is also carrying out widespread searches in rural towns and villages, and is arresting citizens and torturing them to extract confessions on the activists opposed to the tyrant Saddam.

Answering a question on the goals of the Islamic Resistance in southern Iraq, al-Hakim said the Resistance's target is not the Iraqi Army because many of the army's personnel do not sympathize with the regime. The Resistance is chasing and killing the wicked elements who are trying to involve the army in the fight. It is also destroying the heavy weapons used by the regime to kill civilians.

Resistance Reportedly Kills Ba'th Party Official

NC2601185994 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Early this month, Islamic Resistance fighters carried out a daring operation against a Ba'th Party official in al-Hashimiyah Province in al-Hillah. The heroic mujahidin killed the official and seized the car he was driving.

The heroic mujahidin also distributed leaflets denouncing the regime and calling on the Iraqi masses to assist the mujahidin in their heroic operations against the regime's mercenaries and henchmen. The mujahidin also distributed pictures of martyr al-Sadr, the man who triggered the Islamic revolution in Iraq.

According to our sources, there is a remarkable decline in the Army's morale. Desertions have become frequent in the past few days. Army officers have told our sources that they are on the side of the masses and only waiting for the appropriate moment to prove this. The regime has taken repressive measures against Army deserters but the measures have proved futile.

Elsewhere, the so-called emergency forces [quwwat al-tawari'] have been deployed in every governorate. These forces, under the pretext of training, have carried out successive sweeps in residential areas in various governorates according to a weekly timetable. Our sources in the south say that random arrests accompany the sweeps and that hundreds of innocent youths have been detained. In one incident, the emergency forces demolished a house after coming under fire and failing to determine the source. The incident occurred in the Wadi al-Thalith district of al-Hillah.

A kangaroo court of the tyrant's regime has handed down sentences of 10-20 years to the remaining detainees who were still on trial in connection with the Sha'ban [March 1991] uprising. The detainees have been transferred to the notorious Abu-Ghurayb Prison. The overwhelming majority of those involved in the Sha'ban revolution have been liquidated through mass executions or brutal torture.

Opposition Circulates Fake Copies of BABIL

NC2601221694 Paris AFP in English 2152 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Nicosia, Jan 26 (AFP)—The Iraqi opposition said Wednesday it had circulated 50,000 copies of a phony edition of the daily newspaper BABIL, owned by President Saddam Husayn's son 'Udayy, in Baghdad and other major Iraqi cities.

An official of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), which groups all the opposition organisations, told AFP that the phony papers had been distributed since January 6 and that another edition was being prepared.

"We imitated the dummy and the lay-out with photos of Saddam Husayn and filled the columns with criticism, calls for overthrowing the regime and revelations which Iraqis living under Saddam's rule are not used to," the opposition official said by telephone from Irbil in northern Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region.

Other INC leaders contacted by telephone in Irbil and London said the distribution of the fake BABIL edition was continuing despite a campaign by the Iraqi authorities to confiscate all the copies.

They said another edition was being prepared in Irbil, which has been under the control of Iraqi Kurds since 1991, and where the INC have a computerized printing-house.

"The state television had to issue warnings on January 16, calling on the Iraqis to denounce the offenders," a INC official said.

"We receive all the Iraqi newspapers in the north. The citizens living under the control of Baghdad need to be able to hear other views than the official literature," he added.

He said it would not be difficult for the opposition to infiltrate other publications into the country.

Iraq's Kurds declared autonomy after expelling Iraqi troops from their mountainous region in an uprising which followed Baghdad's defeat in the Gulf war early in 1991.

Rabin Welcomes King Husayn's Proposal to Meet

TA2701085794 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 27 Jan 94 pp 1, 19

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer and Washington correspondent Hayim Shibi]

[Excerpt] "I welcome King Husayn's proposal," Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin stated last night in response to the Jordanian monarch's remarks to Israeli journalists about his willingness to meet openly with the Israeli premier.

Upon returning from Strasbourg last night, Rabin said he would welcome any meeting with an Arab leader without any preconditions, of course. These remarks are yet another phase in the warming of relations between Israel and Jordan. [passage omitted]

Likud Welcomes Remarks

TA2701100294 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] The Likud welcomes King Husayn's willingness to meet openly with Yitzhaq Rabin and supports the signing of a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. The communique issued by the Likud further states that the way to attain stability and peace is through a dialogue with Jordan and not with Yasir 'Arafat, because as time goes by, it becomes clearer and clearer that one cannot rely on 'Arafat's promises.

Sarid Foresees Establishment of Palestinian State

TA2701072294 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Yesterday, Environment Minister Yosi Sarid lashed out at the PLO which, according to him, is not honoring the Oslo agreements.

[Begin Sarid recording] I am telling you: As far as I am concerned, the PLO has not yet built confidence. It signed the agreement, but my impression at this point is that it is not honoring that signature. Up until now, I have not discerned any interest on its part in what is happening in the field, and I find this very disappointing and depressing. [end recording]

Having said that, Minister Sarid went on to assert that a Palestinian state will definitely be established. According to him, the establishment of a Palestinian state is an inevitable natural development.

Netanyahu, Tzomet's Eytan on Peace With Jordan

TA2701120094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu says he relayed a message to Jordan's King Husayn via Spain's King Juan Carlos when the latter visited Israel. He wrote the Jordanian king that he believes Israel and Jordan share a joint interest in opposing the establishment of a Palestinian state because it would conspire against the Hashemite court and seek to annex Jordan, and would later act against Israel. Moreover, Netanyahu wrote, Israel is interested in upholding the Hashemite regime in Jordan and in having a permanent arrangement in Judaea and Samaria that would maintain the link between the majority of the population there and Jordan.

Tzomet supports a peace agreement with Jordan based on the current situation. Tzomet Chairman Refa'el Eytan told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that relations with Jordan in the last few years constitute a de facto peace agreement, which could now be given legal expression.

Qiryat Arba' Settlers Evacuated From New Site

TA2601201494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] A large force of soldiers and policemen this evening evacuated the settlers who seized a deserted house north of Qiryat Arba' declaring it a settlement. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that before the evacuation started, the Army declared the area a closed military zone. Our correspondent and four other representatives of the media were among the first to be arrested. The Qiryat Arba' settlers showed passive opposition to the evacuation. Some 20 of them were arrested, and the rest fled to the surrounding hills.

King Husayn Continues Washington Visit

Addresses Arab-Americans

JN2701093694 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Passages within quotation marks are recordings of King Husayn's remarks in English]

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn has met with William Perry, the U.S. secretary of defense designate, at the U.S. Pentagon. [passage omitted]

During His Majesty King Husayn's meeting with representatives of the Arab American societies, his majesty praised the efforts made by Arab Americans to promote and entrench a better understanding of current Arab issues:

[Begin King Husayn recording, in Arabic] I am extremely happy to have this opportunity to welcome the dear ones at this meeting. [end recording]

His majesty spoke about the successive developments in the region and the world, and about the world's recent focus on our region's issues. He stressed that Jordan has always been exerting efforts to achieve a lasting and comprehensive peace, and to arrive at a solution to the Palestine question, which is the crux of the conflict in the region.

"We have begun to address many elements there to see what progress, hopefully, we will make, because as far as a peace treaty is concerned, we feel that it comes at the end. It is a crowning achievement of resolving every problem that we have, and not before, as it has been suggested time and again. You do not ratify peace and then begin to negotiate the terms, the items, or the issues that have to be covered and addressed. And, obviously, we have always been committed to the cause of a just, comprehensive peace, that we hope and pray that we will see as a result of coordination and major efforts being made, and progress on all the other tracks as well, particularly as regards Syria and Lebanon together with Jordan as the Palestinian dimension moves on its own, again supported by everything we can give and do. So, we hope it will come together somehow. I have been very impressed during this visit, and throughout this past period by my contacts with the administration, particularly the President, by his being a man who has an interest, a concern, who seems to know all the details, and has come to know them in a very short space of time of his assuming responsibilities at a time when the United States has so much that it is involved with the world over. And I know that they are sincere and genuine in trying to help see us achieve an objective for future generations to live in peace and in security in the entire region. Today, I think is just a beginning of another phase of the negotiations. Let's hope that they are addressed seriously and with determination and goodwill. And let's hope that at the end of the day we can achieve our objective of a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in our region, which would be our legacy that we will leave for future generations to enjoy beyond us."

His majesty answered the audience's questions which focused on Jordan's role in the region and the world.

"Beyond that, Jordan in the region is trying to work to bring the Arab world together again, hopefully, and this time, hopefully, on strong foundations that can last in the future of trust, and confidence, and cooperation. It's moving in the right direction. We may not always be very popular as regards democracy, or understood. We have a free press, a free press—you know what it means here, and it causes me some headaches as well, but this is our way. This may not be understood by all. I don't think that democracy is a threat. It should be a source of strength, and I hope that the example itself will, in time, be such as to convince our other brethren that this is the only way, that people have to share in shaping their future, that they will, God willing.

"And therefore, we will have the kind of world that it is our duty to try to create for generations to come. So, it is a difficult moment.

"On another level, we are involved in, practically all the UN peacekeeping missions in the world. And we are happy that we are a corner of stability in the region, but we are also playing our role to the best of our ability elsewhere. In the former Yugoslavia, we are building up to over 3,000 Jordanian troops now with the United Nations. And we have been in four other areas as well."

Regarding what Jordan hopes from the ongoing Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington, King Husayn said:

"So we are talking about the delineation and the demarcation of these territories, the setting up of a group to deal with that as it affects Jordan in terms of the area. Mainly we have a small problem in the north, but we are talking about an area from the Dead Sea to al-'Aqabah. And our position is very, very clear against any possible suggestion of: Can Jordan lease land, we can't lease land. This was occupied after '67 by creeping movement under the guise of security or whatever. It is quite a sizeable piece of land. So, we want to settle that, that to revert to our sovereignty, and that beyond that when that is certain we can look at the whole rift valley as an economic unit and then see exactly what can be done. Sovereignty over our territories is one of the essential parts to begin with.

"We have the question of water, that is a very, very important element as well. We have to decide, all of us, exactly what are the rights of all to whatever resources are available. We believe that all the resources that are available are short of what is needed in a very short space of time. Obviously, in a context of peace, we can find other sources in the future, but we have to establish exactly what these rights are right now, so that we can move ahead.

"And the third element obviously has to do with people and their rights, including the question of the reunification of families. We still have so many people that have the right to return legally and are still unable to do so, who have left from time to time, over the years. And I hope that this will be addressed as well. Beyond that,

obviously we will look at the bigger picture regarding the future with all its dimensions, economic or otherwise."

Answering a question about the idea of forming a Jordanian-American business council—which was proposed by his royal highness the crown prince during his recent visit to the United States—his majesty welcomed this initiative saying:

"As far the Jordanian-American business council, we've heard about it, and I've endorsed it and I'm fully supportive of it. And also the elements of what you've put across, sir, we're perfectly ready and happy." [passage omitted]

Speaks to Foreign Relations Council

JN2601194794 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1835 GMT 26 Jan 94

["Text" of speech by King Husayn to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington on 25 January—recorded; in English]

[Text] Mr. (Frye), I would like to thank you most warmly and sincerely for the kind invitation for me to address the Council on Foreign Relations. Mrs. Graham, your warm welcome is deeply felt by myself, Nur, and all members of my Jordanian delegation, here with us this evening.

It is indeed a privilege and a pleasure for me to stand here before you at this most interesting of times, a time of hope, a time of challenge, and, obviously, a time of danger. And as I look around in this hall—the years have forced me to wear glasses—but nonetheless I can easily recognize and see many dear friends I have got the privilege of knowing over the years. I have equally shared with many of you the hopes that we would see progress in our region. It was a very dear objective, the establishment of a just, durable, and lasting peace.

Years have passed and we have had the privilege and the joy of preaching peace, the kind of peace that future generations can live with, can accept, can enjoy. I hope that we will leave them this legacy, a legacy to the children of Abraham for all times to come to live in a region and, hopefully, contribute toward a better future for mankind, a region that has been a beacon, that has contributed much to the progress of mankind throughout its history and on many levels.

I feel that much has happened, and much ground has been covered, and there is, obviously, much more that needs to be done. Briefly, since our participation in formulating Security Council Resolution 242 in 1967, we sought a comprehensive peace, and since the adoption of that resolution, we assumed our responsibilities toward our people and others in the region. With courage and commitment to the cause of their future, we tried over many years to see the implementation of the said resolution. In 1974, at an Arab summit in Rabat in Morocco and in response to a Palestinian demand and an Arab demand we recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine, and we have adhered to our word and our commitment throughout the years and until now. The Cold War affected our region. Shortsighted policies afflicted the region and caused many tragedies. The unresolved Arab-Israeli problem has been the root cause of instability in that region that has been the ladder that has paved the way for many to seek power, not always wisely, and not always in total dedication to the cause of people and their future.

The solution of this problem will bring to all in the region the chance and opportunity to live a life that that has been denied them for far too long—a life that is their right. In the years since '74 we tried every way possible to achieve progress towards peace. Finally we disengaged legally and administratively with the occupied West Bank and this paved the way for the PLO's acceptance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

We all lived through the tremendous changes that have occurred in our world in recent times, and with them the growing feeling in our region by those who look beyond today to tomorrow and to years from now, long after we are no more. In the interest of people, an interest has grown and manifested itself in responsible action hopefully aimed at the establishment of peace. We went to Madrid and we did so after holding a national conference in Jordan and looking at all the options. We went to Madrid supported by the Jordanian people in terms of those commitments to the establishment of peace. We went to Madrid creating the opportunity for our Palestinian brothers to go under an umbrella that has since been pulled down and relegated to a closet of history to provide also the opportunity for the Palestinians to speak for themselves regarding their cause on their land and regarding their future, and beyond Madrid, Moscow, the multilaterals and Washington, and the 13th of September of last year was a day that will be remembered for many many years to come. For, at last, in this capital of the United States of America, Palestinians and Israelis recognized each other and began the process towards resolving their differences based on 242 and 338 that called for negotiations amongst the parties.

The handshakes that were witnessed by the world were indeed of tremendous significance and importance, and I believe they tore down many walls and many obstacles in the case of progress towards the attainment of peace. That was September the 13th. September the 14th, Jordan ratified the agenda that it had worked out with the Government of Israel relating to the subjects that have to be covered and dealt with and resolved, culminating in the establishment of peace. We did so shortly after the event that took place the day before because we were consistent since 1974 recognizing the Palestinians' right and the PLO's right to represent them regarding their fate and their future and their cause on their national soil.

Although it took us by surprise, we could not but be true to ourselves, and therefore, we also recognized the fact that what took place on that date was an act of great wisdom and great courage on both sides. And in support

of it, we could have moved before, but we did not because we wanted to see progress on the Palestinian track with Israel.

What is the future? We are just about starting another round of talks here in Washington, and I hope that it will produce tangible results. We started from the same point in Madrid. We in Jordan have always supported Palestinians regarding their rights on their soil. Finally, they acted on their own. They will continue to have our full support in any way that we can provide for the needs of the times ahead. We and the Palestinians, the Syrians, the Lebanese all started at the same point. And I believe in the very recent past a very important development was the meeting that took place a short while ago in Switzerland between President Clinton and President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria. I have known President al-Asad over many many years, and I firmly believe that there is a conviction amongst very many that he is a man of his word.

My feeling in the recent past and now is one of hope, not only hope, but hope substantiated by reasons of contact and coordination to the best of our abilities with all the other parties involved in this conflict, and in particular Syria. I believe that what we will see in the immediate future is rapid progress, hopefully in addressing all the problems on all the tracks.

A question is asked by some: What of Jordan? Jordan believes and strives for a comprehensive peace in the region. But in terms of the facts, Jordan is now engaged in addressing all the items, all the subjects, that will be the core of the efforts, hopefully, of Jordan and Israel to try to resolve, and that formulated or formed the joint agenda. Some have suggested that I should on this visit, at a meeting with a top Israeli official, ratify a peace treaty. My feeling is that a peace treaty is the crowning achievement, and must be, of resolving all the different problems that are there. And I hope that rapid progress will be made to enable us to reach that point before long. I hope that we will see progress on all the other tracks as well. But we are, hopefully, the masters of our own destiny, and let me be very clear and unequivocal in stating before you, before the skeptics, that our final goal is a peace treaty with Israel, if we can resolve, and when we can resolve, all the problems that we are now addressing in the negotiations that are beginning, and hopefully, will be ongoing.

We have said also that we would be more than happy to see implementation of whatever we agree upon, not to wait till the end. We have a feeling that we have to sensitize people on both sides to what peace means, to the change that is occurring. Jordanian territories must return to Jordanian sovereignty. But once that happens and in a context of peace, we can look at the entire rift valley as an economic unit and one of promise for all in terms of the potential to develop the resources and benefit from them to the largest possible extent by all concerned. Another area is water. That is important to us all. And we must work out a way satisfactory to all in terms of the fairness of the distribution of what is available, and I believe that what is available is not enough for all the needs of people before too long in our region. But in the context of peace other sources can be harnessed and the needs of people can be addressed.

And obviously an area which is very, very important is that of the human dimension of the problem. We feel that it is of utmost importance that people in the occupied territories should receive the greatest possible attention and that the times ahead, with progress in implementing agreements between Israel and the Palestinian people, should immediately see the beginnings of a change in the quality of life, we hope. Beyond that, others elsewhere will need to also feel the change. As you know Jordan has borne the brunt of the results of every disaster that occurred in the entire region. Jordan has been the home of Jordanians, whether they be of Palestinian origin or from whichever part of the Arab world they may be. And our position is still the same. All the members of the Jordanian family will continue to enjoy equal rights in our country, and hopefully equal opportunities to develop in the times ahead, and to live in the kind of environment that has not been possible so far.

I know many of you have looked at the region and worried about us all over many years. But it is a terrible situation when people don't know what each day would bring—the strain, the effort, the uncertainty, the hope that this will change. So all in Jordan will remain members of the one family, proud of our reborn democracy, of the National Charter that was put together by all schools of political thought in our country, of the growing pride of the people of Jordan in their achievements, of their determination to partake in shaping their future, of respect for human rights, respect for human rights in Jordan and hopefully within the region, of the model, of the example, that this small country in a very critical area hopefully can be to others, until such time when others may have the opportunity to return or be compensated or whatever their choice may be. There have been many promises regarding the region in the context of peace so far. I believe the opportunities that will be presenting themselves once we reach that point are tremendous for a partnership between us all in creating a new Middle East, in creating something entirely different to anything that has been there for so many years, in creating peace and harmony and mutual respect between the followers of the three great monotheistic religions—the three Abrahamic religions, in creating opportunities for cooperation, in creating an example for others the world over.

I would like to thank you very, very much indeed for your patience and your time and the opportunity to be with you.

Addresses Washington Press Briefing

JN2701081294 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 27-28 Jan 94 pp 1, 10

[Excerpt] Washington (Agencies)—His Majesty King Husayn said Wednesday [26 January] that Israel should focus more on negotiating the issues of conflict and

arrive at just and comprehensive solutions rather than seeking to sign a peace accord with Jordan first and then negotiate the issues.

The King, addressing a press briefing here on the final day of a visit to Washington, said while Jordan was indeed involved in sorting out the issues on the table with Israel, it was not losing sight of its objective of a comprehensive settlement to the overall Middle East conflict.

The King's comments effectively quashed media suggestions that Jordan and Israel were close to finalising a peace agreement.

The King said: "We are working in regard to our own sphere, we are trying to see at the same that we encourage movement on all other tracks and I believe problems elsewhere are probably less than they are as they affect us because Jordan has borne the brunt of every disaster that has occurred over the years and the heaviest of weights. So we have a long way to go, but I hope that with goodwill on either side—Israeli and Jordanian—we will see rapid progress. I hope it will come together some time."

King Husayn called for an "interfaith dialogue" to determine sovereignty over the Christian, Jewish and Islamic holy places in Jerusalem.

King Husayn suggested it was time to move the issue "outside the political equation."

The King repeated the Arab position that Israel must return the Arab portion of Jerusalem to their control.

He said there was a "need to consider maybe for the first time in our history in the region, the possibility... of an interfaith dialogue... on possibly the sovereignty over these holy places."

"Maybe the followers of the three great religions can come to realise what the signififcance of Jerusalem is to all of them and move it outside the political equation," he said.

Asked for his concept of the fruits of a Middle East peace, King Husayn said it holds "the promise of an entirely different future."

"The talents that are available, the resources that are available, the opportunities that are available, I believe will transform the entire region," he said.

He also said that peace could bring about the removal of many barriers particularly to trade saying it could produce what he called "Middle East NAFTA."

The King said he has "no hangup" about meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

"I hope that an opportunity will arise," he said, but added that he did not expect such a meeting to take place "in the immediate future."

"Our people are meeting, we are negotiating. It is only normal that such a meeting will take place," the King said while posing for photographers with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Earlier, at the press briefing, the King said the meeting would have to be properly prepared so that it could accomplish something.

"It's normal when moving toward peace that people meet," he said.

On Jordan's relations with the Gulf states, particularly with Saudi Arabia, he said:

"As far as Jordan is concerned we have always had... if you take it that way, I have been a follower of my grandfather, and his Late Majesty King 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Sa'ud who came together and settled their differences and left us the responsibility to work together as members of one family in the interest of our nation. Our relations have passed through a period... I think that there are so many aspects that have to be addressed and could be addressed when we are able to meet face to face as I have tried since the outset.

"As far as we are concerned, we are most anxious to see the relations return to their warmth and to be based on mutual confidence and trust and to be based on the desire to cooperate in the interest of the Arab Nation as a whole.

"I hope the time will come, and I think we are moving in the right direction and I believe when we have a chance to meet we will discover that it was a very serious storm in a teacup, and I hope that our brethren in Saudi Arabia will realise that we never meant them any harm nor did we cause them any harm at all."

On Iraq and the continuing U.N. sanctions on that country, the King said:

"I have always said that I hope that this nightmare will come to an end sometime very soon, and particularly as it impacts on the Iraqi people and their continued suffering under the prevailing conditions. Somehow I hope we will get out of the area of Iraq not being an active, constructive part of the Arab world and the community of nations as soon as possible.

He said his version of peace was "peace, a real peace, a peace that gives everybody the opportunity to work together and to achieve their hopes for the future. And I spoke in detail about some of the problems that we have to address.

"(A) [as published] The problem of occupied territories, and I am talking of Jordanian occupied territories without prejudice to what our Palestinian brethren are talking about right now. And I have stated categorically that in that regard we feel very, very strongly that these areas—the small problem in the north of the Jordan Valley but there is a considerable area in the southern Jordan Valley that needs to be looked at in the sense of

the urgency of our demand that Jordanian territory be returned to us. So there is the suggestion, and hopefully movement, on creating a group that will look at delineation and demarcation of the borders. And I hope that the coming days will see some progress here and people can move on the ground there. Once that is settled—and it has to mean the return of Jordanian territory to Jordanian sovereignty—then we can look at the entire rift valley and look at what can be done in the context of looking at it as a complete economic unit—in terms of resources, in terms of all the potential that there is to develop into the best way possible to the benefit of all.

"So the question of borders and territories and sovereignty over our territories is one of the aspects that has to be addressed. Another area is water, and there again, I believe that all the available resources might not be adquate for the needs of all concerned in the future, but certainly we have to work out the distribution of these waters in a satisfactory way in terms of the percentages that are peoples' rights. Beyond that, hopefully in a context of peace, we can look at what can be done beyond that to secure needed water for all concerned and obviously the third dimension—and this is not all because there are many other items on the agenda—is the human dimension. [sentence, punctuation as published] There has to be a qualitative change of life. I would hope that the priority will be given to people in the occupied territories, but beyond that, the region, for everybody to feel what peace is, to know that peace is, to realise what transformation there is as we progress along to its attainment."

"I am really optimistic and that is my tendency, of course I can never be absolutely certain that things will work the way we wish. But I think that there is a general concensus amongst the overwhelming majority of people that we move towards resolving problems. I hope Palestinians on their soil will enjoy democracy and pluralism, respect for human rights and a chance to live and work with us and I hope that Jordan and Palestine eventually can be an example to others in the entire region."

In reply to a question on an assertion in a book written by an Israeli general in which he said that the King went to Israel before the war of 73 and he warned the Israelis that the Egyptians and Syrians will attack them.

"Sir, when the war of 1973 occurred, we were not informed. It was kept from us. It took me totally by surprise. You know that and the world knows that. As far as the subject of contacts between Jordan and Israel, the ground rules had been that nothing should be said about these contacts but they have existed since the ratification of Security Council Resolution 242 in an attempt to implement it in the context of Arab agreement until '74. After '74 it became the PLO's responsibility in accordance with an Arab summit decision and we have tried to persuade all to move in that direction. Only the Palestinians could speak for themselves. It has taken us since '74 to '93 to '94 to arrive at that point. Now things have moved. But any other suggestions are totally—in reference specifically to that question of yours, which I hope you wouldn't have asked in the first place—that is totally untrue, sir." [passage omitted]

Confers With Christopher

JN2701070194 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0530 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has met in Washington with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Discussions dealt with the latest in the Middle East peace process and its various dimensions. His majesty asserted Jordan's commitment to achieve a comprehensive and just peace in the region on the basis of the international legitimacy. He said such peace will open a new era for the peoples of the region to head towards construction and a better life after suffering from tension and conflicts for the past decades.

On his part, Mr. Christopher praised his majesty's efforts in support of peace and asserted the need for continuing and intensifying U.S.-Jordanian contacts to achieve the joint aspiration for peace.

The meeting at the U.S. State Department was attended by senior officials from the two sides.

YEDI'OT AHARONOT Interviews Prince Hasan

TA2101170794 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 21 Jan 94 pp 2-5

[Interview with Crown Prince Hasan by Mira Avrekh at the royal palace in Amman; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Avrekh] You have never given an interview to an Israeli journalist. Why now?

[Hasan] During the Madrid conference, a meeting with an Israeli journalist might have been construed as an attempt to intervene in the peace process. Therefore, everything was done through official spokesmen. But now, after the White House meeting between Clinton, Peres, and myself, I believe it is important to present our points of view and concepts.

I must note that something annoyed me, and I will take this opportunity to clarify it. I am referring to the report published in the newsletter issued by BIPAC (the pro-Israeli lobby in Britain). It quoted—in a very imprecise way—a conversation I had with the editor of the Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR and created the impression that I had said that the meeting with Peres in Washington had been "forced" on me.

I have already sent Peres a message on that via Grenville Janner (a leader of British Jewry). That story harmed the Washington meeting, which took place in an atmosphere of mutual respect. It was also another reason why I thought it right to meet with an Israeli journalist now.

[Avrekh] The assumption in Israel has always been that Jordan would be the first—or at least the second—Arab

state to sign a peace treaty with Israel. For years, there were meetings between Israelis and Jordanians, and you made sure the border remained quiet. Do you foresee an Israeli-Jordanian peace accord in 1994?

[Hasan] Definitely. I would like to stress that Jordan was, in fact, first. Already in the 1930's, my grandfather, King 'Abdallah, offered the Jews autonomy. At that time, as is known, the State of Israel had not yet been established, and that idea could have served as a framework for coexistence. In fact, my grandfather paid with his life for his beliefs.

Jordan adopted a long list of initiatives. There is a lengthy history of meetings between senior Israelis and Jordanians. In my view, the question is why we did not manage to make progress on basic security issues for 25 years. It is our impression that Israel finds it hard to agree openly and publicly to final recognition of its borders with Jordan.

In fact, this is quite a marginal issue compared with the territorial problem with Syria or the demand for withdrawal from Lebanese territory. Israel apparently fears creating a precedent. But we, for our part, aspire to the principle of implementing sovereignty on our borders, and I am referring to the borders from the time of the British Mandate. If we manage to define sovereignty within the concept of borders, then we will be able to make progress on water and refugee issues.

I would like to stress that the peace we want is a "warm peace." Therefore, for instance, we welcomed the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the PLO because it broke the "taboo." The very act of shaking hands was important, but what has still not been done, and must now be done, is to insert that agreement of principles into an overall peace framework.

It is clear that statesmen on both sides are trying to create "windows" to peace. But if we do not have a vision of a peaceful region, it will be very hard to achieve peace in the most important areas. The water problem cannot be solved through bilateral meetings. The human problem cannot be solved by making Jordan a "garbage dump" in order to solve the demographic problems of the region.

We therefore welcomed the good news of the Clinton-al-Asad meeting; we welcomed the good news of the talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis. But we must ask ourselves: Will it lead us to a "warm peace?"

[Avrekh] You talk about returning to the mandatory borders, but in negotiations both parties have to give up something. Can we reach peace this way?

[Hasan] In Jordan's case, there is a clear, simple line which starts in the Jordan Valley, runs through the center of the Jordan River, and continues up to the Red Sea. Therefore, we are not talking about the demarcation of new borders, but rather of recognizing a principle—even if this recognition has not yet been made public. This must be done in the framework of the bilateral talks.

I would like to explain that I am not bringing up this problem as part of an attempt to raise obstacles or sabotage the process. This issue is important to our people. People will say, as you mentioned earlier, that for 20 years our countries have been neither at peace nor at war. Jordan, for of its own security considerations, was committed to preventing infiltrations across its western border. People will ask what Jordan received in return for this?

American visitors come and tell us: We want open meetings between Jordanians and Israelis. I say: Instead of holding public meetings on tourism or on economic issues, which we are doing anyway at the Washington and Paris talks, we must meet on the issue of sovereignty. This will let us leave the problems of border demarcation behind and let us move on to discuss the rational use of our resources.

[Avrekh] How will the Palestinians fit in here?

[Hasan] At the moment, I am talking about the sovereign affairs of the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan. This especially pertains to the southern part of the 'Arava valley. For example, if one seeks to promote the idea of a canal between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea, or develop the Elat-al-'Aqabah free trade zone concept, then the current situation, in which soldiers stop potential investors at the cease fire lines because it is a security area, is inconceivable. Therefore, a resolution of this problem will constitute a breakthrough.

[Avrekh] Do you see the possibility of establishing a joint airport between al-'Aqabah and Elat? The 1986 London Agreement (between King Husayn and Shim'on Peres) spoke of granting Jordan access to a Mediterranean port. Do you believe that progress toward implementing these ideas can be made in 1994?

[Hasan] This once more brings us back to our starting point—the border question. After all, if one talks about an airport, one is also dealing with civilian airspace zones and so forth. This is also true with regard to ports. Thus, if we satisfactorily resolve of the problem of sovereignty, we can make progress toward effectively treating other problems.

[Avrekh] The London Agreement got off to a promising start, but suddenly got "stuck." What exactly happened there?

[Hasan] I believe there were different interpretations: There was former Secretary of State Shultz' interpretation, Peres' interpretation, and perhaps also our own interpretation. But eventually what happened was that Peres, foreign minister at the time, went back to the Israeli Government with proposals which were based on the agreement. The government had just changed, and Shamir had assumed the premiership. The London

Agreement did not head the government's list of priorities and it was "frozen." Shultz, for his part, was too slow in presenting the issue.

We can also go back to 1974. At the time we had some agreements of a limited nature which were reached after the Yom Kippur War. The possibility of a partial withdrawal to the lines of the "Alon Plan" [plan by former Labor party minister calling for territorial compromise with Israel retaining control of strategic areas] was discussed. There was also an idea, raised in 1972, for a Jordanian-Israeli confederation. Ultimately, none of this was implemented.

As for the 1986 plan, it is important to stress that we presented a development plan for the occupied territories. It is reasonable to assume that this plan would have prevented a great many of the manifestations of extremism you have been forced to live with since 1988. The plan, however, was rejected and Israel viewed it as a Jordanian attempt to intervene in the affairs of the occupied territories.

[Avrekh] Were the issues of water and economy, that you mentioned before, discussed by King Husayn and Shim'on Peres in Amman approximately two months ago?

[Hasan, laughing] I will put it this way: Yes, these issues were raised in the framework of the continuous contacts with Mr. Peres.

[Avrekh] When, in your opinion, will Israelis be able to visit Petra? You must know that this has always been the dream of many Israeli youths.

[Hasan] The question of tourism and reciprocal visits is very important and has to be discussed in the framework of the peace process. The issue of tourism must be resolved in the framework of bilateral agreements between our two states. [passage omitted]

[Avrekh] How would you describe Jordan's involvement in the peace process between the Palestinians and Israel?

[Hasan] First of all, one must remember that Jordan granted the Palestinians shelter—and, on the other hand, benefited from their contribution during three demographic waves in 1948, 1967, and 1991 (when Kuwait and other Gulf states expelled Palestinians to Jordan).

As for the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, it focuses on the 1967 refugees. The pre-1967 refugees, or in other words those from 1948, are asking: What do we gain from this declaration?

This clearly is an emotionally charged problem. We must make people understand that peace offers something for everyone, for every human being. This cannot be explained in a one-sided fashion. You, for example, have a concept calling for the ingathering of the diaspora, of bringing Jews to Israel from various, diverse, communities around the world. In addition, the State of Israel also has a demographic problem. We, when talking about a comprehensive peace, the water problem.... [pauses] For example, we have to deal with the matter of water consumers in disputed areas.

In my opinion, most people realize this. They understand that peace is indeed an effective panacea, as long as peace is established throughout the entire region. This is the reason we stress the need for a comprehensive peace.

[Avrekh] What do you expect to be achieved at the meeting between King Husayn and President Clinton in Washington? Generally speaking, what is the present state of relations between Jordan and the United States?

[Hasan] Following the developments of the past three years and Operation Desert Storm, many questions about Jordan's role and positions were aired. However, I believe that there is growing recognition for the active role Jordan plays for the United States; something between Israel as a strategic asset and the strategic value of the oil wells.

In order to fulfill such a difficult role—the "Finlandization" of Jordan, if that is the way it can be described (with reference to the important role played by neutral Finland during the Cold War)—one must understand the kind of conditions required to guarantee stability in Jordan. Stability and security are a comprehensive and all encompassing concept.

I am also speaking in terms of "hard" security, which common to Jordan and other countries in the region: The military's role in deterring terrorism, preventing infiltrations by radical elements, drug interdiction, stopping weapons sales, and even preventing money laundering.

There are also problems of "soft" security. I am referring to problems connected with economic and social progress. I would like to see more efforts to redress inequality. Only recently has the American press begun to write about a situation in which the average per capita income for a Palestinian is $800, as compared to $15,000 for Israelis or for residents of the Gulf states.

These problems, which are closely linked to a person's ability to live with dignity, must be resolved in the framework of the peace process.

As for the meeting between King Husayn and President Clinton—I think it must lead to practical steps. For example, in my meeting today with a congressional delegation, we discussed the establishment of a Middle East free trade zone, something similar to NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) in our region. We spoke of cooperating in the establishment of a Middle East development bank.

As I said before, agreement on the issue of sovereignty and border demarcation is a prerequisite for all this. Afterwards, we can start work on resolving the water problem, on developing the region's human potential,

and on effecting the economic integration of the region to bring us into the 21st century.

[Avrekh] With your permission, I would like to return to the Clinton-al-Asad summit. In your opinion, has al-Asad changed because the USSR collapsed and he now needs the United States, or because he realized with time, that war, or a state of war and no peace, will lead him nowhere?

[Hasan] It is a combination of the things you mentioned. The bipolar world we knew when the USSR existed is gone. That means that new regional definitions and characteristics must grow now. We have to recognize that we must redefine the Middle East as a "region."

Almost every part of the world is defined as a region, while, though called this, the Middle East has so far been a collection of individual countries that have not operated on a regional basis. The international community has bilateral contacts with the various countries, not with the region as such.

In 1975, Syria, Egypt, and Jordan signed an agreement for economic cooperation with Europe. Israel and Lebanon signed a similar agreement. I am certain that it benefited Israel much more than it did the Arab countries. I believe that Damascus feels, just as we feel here in Amman, that it would be very difficult to compete with other regions if we do not define the Middle East as a region. For example, South Africa, where peace has also been made now, is seeking international investments and the world's attention.

It would be very difficult to go on talking in the sterile context of individual Arab capitals or "lonesome Israel." Indeed, I am certain that the time has come to redefine Southwest Asia, or the eastern Mediterranean shores. I believe these views certainly exist in, and are expressed by Damascus.

Naturally, in order to make this aspiration come true, the parties involved should be given incentives—and not only negative ones. President Nixon once told me that in order to attain peace, you have to "pressure" each of the parties a little. Well, Jordan has been "pressured" enough... (laughing).

[Avrekh] What do you see as the solution to the security problems of the Middle East by the year 2000?

[Hasan] I believe in the concept of a Middle East conference on security cooperation. As will be recalled, this was done in Europe with success. We must identify and define our enemies, and I speak of common enemies such as terrorism, which is a clear case, or drugs. In this case, we may certainly speak of regional cooperation.

At the same time, if we are stuck with dealing with the old "skeletons" of the previous conflicts, it would be very hard to produce movement or flexibility toward an agreement to reduce the size of the military establishments in the region.

Incidentally, I believe that on this matter we pay too much attention to American research institutes such as Brookings, Enterprise, or Carnegie. What do we, the residents of the region, contribute to the vision of our regional security? This issue was raised in my discussion with President Clinton and Minister Peres.

[Avrekh] How do you view the ups and downs of the Israel-Palestinian negotiations? What do you think of 'Arafat's conduct?

[Hasan] To a certain extent, the problems stem from the manner in which the agreement of principles was made—the secrecy of the Oslo talks. Still, as we have said several times before, it is essential to move on from Oslo and the Washington handshake to the practical things required to make the autonomy materialize.

[Avrekh] What are the implications of the PLO-Jordan economic agreement on economic relations between Israel and the West Bank?

[Hasan] It is obvious that the central banks of Israel and Jordan share a common interest in promoting an economic entity that could mediate between the various Palestinian territories. Naturally, we would like to see international, as well as Arab, investments in the territories through existing apparatuses. Obviously, the Palestinians want to establish a development bank, but I would like it to be established in a regional framework. In the end, it is up to the Palestinians to decide on how to solve the practical problems.

[Avrekh] What is your view of economic cooperation between Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians by the year 2000?

[Hasan] Well, in 1970, an Israeli research institute presented an "assignment of duties" between Israel, Egypt, and Jordan. The basic idea was that the Arab countries will provide the manpower, while Israel provides the technology. I believe that such strict assignment of duties is not required. I would like to see the Middle East as the European coast of Asia, and the Asian coast of Europe.

[Avrekh] Could you point at a date when a peace accord will be signed between Israel and Jordan?

[Hasan] I have already mentioned that we need "warm peace." I hope that 1994 will be the year of crossing the threshold to such peace. Whether this crossing of threshold will include the signing a peace contract, depends on the creativity and honesty of the parties.

[Avrekh] But you believe it is possible?

[Hasan] We live in the Middle East, so we have to believe in miracles....

Al-Hariri: Peace Depends on Israel's Withdrawal

NC2701091394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri will leave London this morning and will make a short stopover at Istanbul airport where he will hold talks with the Turkish prime minister on issues of common concern that were raised during his recent visit to Turkey. The prime minister and his delegation will then visit al-Qardahah in Syria to offer condolences to President Hafiz al-Asad on the death of his son Staff Major Basil al-Asad.

Last night, Prime Minister al-Hariri addressed the alumni of the American University of Beirut-London branch. The prime minister dealt with the current situation and the Lebanese Government's stances and plans to reconstruct Lebanon. He reiterated that his visit to London has been successful, noting that British companies will contribute toward reconstructing Lebanon. Prime Minister al-Hariri had the following to say:

[Begin al-Hariri recording] I believe that our visit to Britain was successful and the outcome exceeds our expectations. It had been a long time since a Lebanese prime minister visited Britain, but the atmosphere of frankness and amity that prevailed during our talks with British officials demonstrate [words indistinct]. I firmly believe that a new page has been turned in Lebanese-British relations.

British companies will take part in the reconstruction of Lebanon, particularly in the realms of electricity and irrigation. British companies could possibly participate in any project if their quotations are competitive. The British Government supports this trend. During my meetings with British businessmen yesterday and today I sensed that they are quite serious, that they respect the Lebanese people, and that they have confidence in Lebanon. We will benefit from their expertise and they will benefit from the opportunities.

Britain is a friendly state. It fully supports Security Council Resolution 425, Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon, and the establishment of peace—a comprehensive and just peace that safeguards dignity and honor. [sentence indistinct] We have many friends in the world, and all our friends support us. We hope to secure an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and that peace will prevail in the region.

If Israel indeed wants to live in peace, the Arabs, all the Arabs, are quite prepared to reciprocate. The Arabs are indeed willing to live in peace. [Words indistinct] but Israel must realize that it cannot keep the land, occupy the land, and have peace too. If Israel wants peace, it must withdraw from the land in the Golan and south Lebanon.

The ball is now in Israel's court. The Arabs have tried everything to show the world that they are peace advocates. The world has started to listen to us with open minds. Lebanon, like the other states in the region, will benefit from peace, therefore peace is our real objective. Peace, however, should not be made by one side; it must rather be sought by both sides. The Israelis are attacking us every day and 10 percent of our land is occupied. Israel must withdraw and peace will then be established. [end recording]

Samir Ja'ja', Delegation Pay Condolences to Al-Asad

NC2701073094 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Lebanese Forces [LF] Commander Dr. Samir Ja'ja', leading a delegation from the LF and the Phalangist Salvation Committee [dissidents from the Phalangist Party], visited al- Qardahah yesterday to pay condolences to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad over the death of his son Basil.

From the LF, the delegation included Fu'ad Malik, Elie Abu-Tayi', George Antoin, Ibrahim Yaziji, Antoine Najm, Joseph Rizq, Tawfiq Hindi, Raji 'Abduh, and George 'Abd-al-Masih. From the Phalangist Salvation Front the delegation included George Kassab, 'Adil Saqr, Alfred Madi, Khalil Basil, Jospeh Faddul, Farid Habib, and Joe Sarkis.

The delegation returned to Ghidras from al-Qardahah shortly after 1600 yesterday.

Hizballah Strategy After Geneva Summit Viewed

NC2601204594 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 24 Jan 94 p 21

[Report by Hala Madi]

[Text] Following the Geneva summit between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton, Lebanese parties will be reviewing their positions and calculations before the resumption of bilateral negotiations this month in Washington.

Among these parties is Hizballah. Both at home and abroad, Hizballah is widely seen as one party that is more likely than others to do some rethinking. Hizballah's regional and domestic views link its fate closely to the talks. Hizballah is known for its special links with Iran, a country that aspires to a regional role and sees Lebanon as a major vehicle for that role.

According to Hizballah sources, the party has not awaited the convocation of this summit or the resumption of negotiations to redraw its guidelines and rethink its role. Hizballah, thanks to the information it has and the close contact it maintains with Damascus and Tehran, has for a long time prepared its answer to all possibilities involving the talks' success or failure. Hizballah has been getting ready for all the possible outcomes and repercussions of the negotiations ever since they started.

Domestically, Hizballah's position continues to be one of general opposition to negotiations and reconciliation with Israel. It will continue to maintain this position. What changed is the method of confrontation it will follow depending on whether the negotiations succeed or fail.

If the negotiations succeed, Lebanon will, naturally, sign a peace agreement with Israel. In this case, Hizballah will oppose any agreement before Israel withdraws completely from Lebanon. If Israel withdraws before reaching such an agreement, Hizballah will consider this withdrawal a victory for the resistance. Subsequently, Hizballah will examine ways of adjusting to the coming phase and its regional implications. If the signing of the peace agreement with Israel takes place before Israel's withdrawal, Hizballah will fight this agreement and seek to annul it.

In this context, well-informed sources say that Hizballah has told senior security officials that it is opposed to any peace agreement reached before an Israeli withdrawal. Hizballah's Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has met with security officials and told them in no uncertain terms that "if someone tries to shed our blood, ours will not be the only blood shed."

According to the same sources, if the negotiations fail to produce positive results, Hizballah will continue its course of armed resistance. It has taken all precautions and preparations to continue the confrontation. According to reliable information obtained by AL-SHIRA', the decision to continue the military confrontation, pending the outcome of the negotiations, is divided into two parts: The first is to introduce internal changes and the second is to rehabilitate all Hizballah elements militarily.

Regarding the first part, the two visits paid by Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah to Tehran in the past few months resulted in several agreements designed to bring about better control of the party's various political, security, and social departments. One important result of these two visits was a decision to strengthen the security and political departments, confine them in the hands of Nasrallah, and eliminate all departments subservient to Iranian officials. For this purpose, a special bureau has been established under the control of Nasrallah. The bureau will coordinate in advance all military and security operations and seek Nasrallah's approval of them. Consequently, 'Abd-al-Hadi Hammadi has given up his security responsibilities within the party. Hizballah has also focused its activity on the south at the expense of its presence in other areas. It has given priority to the south on all levels, especially in the field of services and in implementation of the secret resolutions of a conference it held seven months ago. The conference was then unofficially coined the "South Conference."

Regarding the second part, namely military rehabilitation, in the past three months Hizballah has retrained all its full-time and part-time elements. It has retrained 10,000 full-time fighters in several classes held in al-Hirmil and nearby areas. The training took place under the supervision of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. Long courses, some lasting over two months, were held for cadres, military officials, and others in Tehran. The part-timers who are able to fight have undergone 10-day training courses. About 6,000 part-timers have taken part in these courses.

If Hizballah has reviewed its calculations and prepared itself for the coming period, other parties in the Lebanese arena will also find themselves compelled to review their calculations after the Geneva summit. This particularly applies to the parties that have opposed the al-Ta'if accord, as well as the parties that have wagered and still are wagering that international and regional developments will turn the clock back in Lebanon.

AL-SHIRA' Notes al-Asad Summit Achievements

NC2601220294 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 24 Jan 94 pp 4-6

[Article by Chief Editor Hasan Sabra: "Al-Asad's Summit"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] President al-Asad arrived in Geneva backed by a cohesive domestic front, a comfortable economy, a huge modern Army, a unified vision, and a decisive spirit. Can Washington, the West, and those who inform and carry out analyses for President Clinton possibly forget that pan-Arab Syria, with its secular system, is the only country without an Islamic fundamentalism problem, indeed, the only Arab country that uses fundamentalist groups to strengthen its position anywhere?

The West cannot forget that Syria has often come under siege, so critical in one case that the Syrian Treasury contained under $50,000 in hard currency. Yet Syria never retreated; indeed, it became more committed and more determined. [passage omitted]

What does al-Asad want and what did he achieve?

What does Clinton want and what did he achieve?

Al-Asad got an American presence in Geneva, a meeting with an Arab president, when the Americans are used to summoning Third World leaders, including some Arabs.

Al-Asad had a chance for full, comprehensive, and methodic talks with Clinton. He forced the President of the world's biggest power to listen to him for five and a half hours. Al-Asad did most of the talking. Usually, the Americans summon presidents to convey brief messages within minutes. They then look at their watches and allow photographers in to take pictures—perhaps the most important outcome of meetings with U.S. Presidents.

President al-Asad entrenched the Madrid formula for a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on the exchange of land for peace and the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. President al-Asad added Security Council Resolution 425 concerning Lebanon and the American President agreed. This resolution was not discussed in the past so as to reassure Syria that Israel would not take advantage and tempt some Lebanese into thinking that a separate deal with Lebanon could be concluded on the basis of the resolution.

Al-Asad established that dialogue to achieve settlement is not held directly with the Zionist enemy, but directly with Washington as a sponsor (together with Russia) of the peace conference. The conference was originally held on this basis. It continues to be held on the same basis although Israel affected the unified Arab position through the separate deal with Yasir 'Arafat and its Gaza-Jericho offshoot.

Al-Asad returned the just and comprehensive peace to the peace process headlines. The American President stated his agreement publicly at the news conference after having stated it in the meeting.

President al-Asad's success in reviving the idea of a comprehensive peace seems the equivalent of the fall of the Gaza-Jericho deal. This means al-Asad is again holding the Palestinian card. What the Palestinians lost through 'Arafat—the dream of a state—can be achieved through al-Asad within the framework of the comprehensive peace as an alternative to 'Arafat's separate deal.

Al-Asad succeeded in turning the meeting with President Bill Clinton into a chance to normalize relations with the United States. This nullifies Israel's pronouncement—which succeeded in the cases of al-Sadat and 'Arafat—that normalization with Israel is the key to normalization with the United States. Al-Asad appeared very successful in making normalization with the United States the key to an Arab-Zionist settlement and then to the establishment of successful relations with the United States.

Successful bilateral relations with Washington allow Syria to play a major regional role affecting Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and perhaps others, especially since Damascus has special relations with Tehran and good ties with Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and most Arab Gulf states. With this, the Golan is restored, and Syria's forthcoming role grows bigger.

Israel sought normalization with Syria so that it could infiltrate the Arab east, as it succeeded through the Gaza-Jericho agreement with 'Arafat.

But by normalizing its relations with Washington, Damascus can retain a full pan-Arab role that will certainly not be in Israel's favor.

Al-Asad—and this is very important—succeeded in convincing the U.S. Administration that Israel is the party that must say whether it wants peace or not. Even more, he succeeded in persuading Clinton to rearrange the settlement priorities to be as follows: first, withdrawal; second, security; third, normal relations.

Withdrawal is needed from Israel.

Security is needed from Israel and Syria.

Normal relations are needed from Syria.

Moreover, al-Asad managed to tell the Americans, and Clinton agreed, that if peace is not achieved now, Israel will be held responsible; Syria will bear no consequences, and no one can then threaten it or accuse it of terrorism.

Al-Asad also managed to differentiate between Hizballah, which the United States accuses of terrorism, and the resistance to liberate the south from the Zionist occupation, although Hizballah is the main tool of resistance there.

Concerning withdrawal, Clinton accepted al-Asad's condition. Al-Asad threw the ball into the Zionist court and sowed the seeds of a U.S.-Israeli dispute.

It must be said that al-Asad did not make the Golan issue the driving force behind his movement and demands so that he could not be easily besieged and forced into concessions. Although he said the Golan is in the heart of Syria, he never forgot that Syria's role is much larger than a piece of land, no matter how valuable.

Concerning security, President al-Asad returned the ball to the American court. He said Damascus is threatened because it is only a few kilometers away from the occupied land while the Palestinian (Israeli) cities are hundreds of kilometers away from the front. This presents America with an invitation to come to the region at Syria's request, not against Syria's will. This would ensure security for Syria and stop resistance operations against occupation, which is supposed to end; occupation is removed and resistance then stops.

As regards normal relations, peace is established through the desire of the Arab people at a time when such peace appears to be the least of all evils, made at the hands of a leadership that achieved the maximum level of hopes and dreams at this stage, and at a time when the world appeared stunned at the capabilities of this leader, who, in the darkest of times, manages to get the best terms and those closest to Arab hopes in an age of retreats.

No one should forget that what President al-Asad achieved at this stage is the same thing offered to us when Arab solidarity was at its peak, when Egypt was the leader of the Arab world, when Arab oil and money were available and undepleted, when the Soviet Union existed with its military, economic, and political support and international influence, when Iraq was healthy before two destructive wars, when Israel did not have nuclear weapons, when Zionist superiority was clear but not decisive, when Lebanon was not destroyed, and when Palestinian resistance was active. [passage omitted]

Envoy Rules Out Separate Agreement With Israel

LD2501152994 Rabat MAP in English 1307 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Text] Rabat, Jan. 25 (MAP)—"Any separate agreement with Israel is doomed to [word indistinct]" said Syrian Ambassador in Rabat 'Ali Hasan.

In a statement to Moroccan private TV Channel (2M), the Syrian ambassador said his country is for a comprehensive settlement to the Mideast crisis and will not accept that Israel withdraws from the Golan Heights while maintaining its occupation of southern Lebanon.

On the latest al-Asad-Clinton summit, the Syrian ambassador said President Clinton pledged to see to the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions while President Hafiz al-Asad stressed the need to grant importance to the Arab viewpoint far from the Zionist propaganda.

On the presence of the Syrian Army in southern Lebanon, 'Ali Hasan said the Syrian presence cannot be compared in any way to that of Israel. "Syria came to southern Lebanon at the request of the Lebanese Government while Israel used force to occupy the zone", the Syrian ambassador explained.

Belgian Minister Departs After 3-Day Visit

JN2601191894 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1600 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Damascus, 26 Jan (SANA)—Robert Urbain, Belgium's minister of foreign trade, and his accompanying delegation left Damascus this morning after a three-day visit to Syria. During the visit, Urbain held talks with ministers in charge of the economic sector in Syria and Syrian businessmen on developing cooperation relations in all fields.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Dr. Muhammad al-'Imadi, minister of economy and foreign trade, and senior ministry officials.

Afghanistan

Members of Hezb-e Eslami Join Rabbani

LD2601193394 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Excerpt] A Military correspondent of the Bakhtar Information Agency reported to us that commander of Imam Qotaiba Brigade associated with Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] called the unholy alliance of Golboddin with Dostam and Karmal a treacherous and anti-Islamic act. He cut off links with Golboddin's militia and joined [words indistinct] in Baghlan Province along with 500 people and 50 pieces of heavy weapons. Mulla Abdurrahim, commander Abdol Wali, commander Jalal, commander Mirza Rahim and commander Abdol Hanan are among those who have joined the jihad. These commanders have severed their links with Golboddin's militia and play their Islamic role on the side of the Islamic army's forces and mujahedin in the war of right against wrong. As many as 100 armed men of Unit 10 under the command of Mohammadollah Nader in Poza-e Eshan in Baghlan Province have joined Jihadi Division 20. According to a report by correspondent of Bakhtar Information Agency, the unit was associated with Brigade 4 of the anti-Islamic Movement of Kamal-Dostam militia. They have joined the Islamic army voluntarily in order to take part in the crushing of the enemies of Islam. Mohammadollah Nader, commander of the unit, in a speech said: For the independence of the country and for jihad and campaign against the enemies of Islam, Karmal, Dostam and Golboddin, we are ready for self-sacrifice. [passage omitted]

Uzbeks Reported Preparing Assault on Kabul

94AE0067A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Article by Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan in Peshawar and 'Abdallah al-Hajj in Jeddah]

[Text] Peshawar, Jeddah—The scope of air raids against Kabul was broadened yesterday. Aircraft of the Uzbek militias, which are led by General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, raided the presidential palace, which is the headquarters of President Burhanoddin Rabbani, Kabul Airport, the main intelligence center, and other government positions. Sources close to the militias have told AL-HAYAH that the raids are intended to pave the way for an assault that they will launch jointly with the supporters of Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar to seize control of Kabul.

It has also been reported that militia aircraft have, moreover, raided the stronghold of the Ettehad-e Eslami, which is led by Shaykh 'Abd-Rabb Rasul Seyyaf, in Paghman, west of the capital. It is well known that Seyyaf is a close associate of the Afghan president.

Afghan diplomatic sources have reported that government forces have downed a MIG-21 belonging to the militias in Paghman and that they have killed General ['Abdol] Ghafar Pahlawan, a most prominent Uzbek militia commander, in clashes between the two sides in the city of Mazar-e Sharif, one of northern Afghanistan's largest cities. These sources added that Habibollah Beg, another Uzbek general, and 2,000 of his fighters have surrendered to the government forces in Faryab Governorate.

Sources of the Jami'at-e Eslami, led by Rabbani, in Peshawar have told AL-HAYAH that government aircraft have not taken part in the Kabul battles because they have been busy raiding militia positions in Mazar-e Sharif so as to strike these militias in their stronghold.

Yesterday, Hekmatyar's supporters issued a statement reiterating their demand that the president resign and reaffirming their rejection of a cease-fire unless Rabbani responds to this demand. A committee of field commanders has declared its rejection of the demands of both sides and has called for forming a new and neutral government.

Imminent Assault

Sources close to Dostam have told AL-HAYAH that the air raids are in preparation for a fierce assault that the militias will launch jointly with the Hezb-e Eslami, which is headed by Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, within 72 hours to seize Kabul. The sources added that the air raids are intended to weaken and destroy the government forces' defenses.

Yesterday, Pakistan closed its border in the face of emigrants fleeing the war in the capital. Pakistani Government sources have said that 14,000 Afghan citizens have crossed the border into Pakistan since the battles started at the beginning of this month.

Calls for Peace

At a time when Pakistan has urged the feuding parties to stop the fighting, UN Secretary General Butros-Ghali has called for an immediate truce and urged all Afghans to settle their conflicts peacefully.

The Afghan Peace Committee, which is led by Field Commander Jalaloddin Haqqani and which includes prominent 'ulema, field commanders, and intellectuals, held a press conference in which it has called for forming an expanded consultative council.

India

Police Block Anti-U.S. Protest at Embassy

BK2701093894 Hong Kong AFP in English 0932 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] New Delhi, Jan 27 (AFP)—Police scattered thousands of demonstrators who broke through steel barricades and tried to head for the US Embassy here on Thursday [27 Jan] to protest alleged US meddling in Indian affairs.

Flag-waving, slogan-chanting activists of the youth wing of India's ruling Congress (I) party took part in the demonstration, which police stopped on an avenue leading to the mission, witnesses said.

The police sprayed the protesters with water cannon when they knocked down barricades. Some demonstrators were physically lifted and flung back but no one was seriously injured.

The clash came after a small Youth Congress (I) delegation left for the US Embassy with police permission to present a letter of protest to the mission, located in the high-security diplomatic enclave.

"Bill Clinton, down down," chanted the estimated 3,500 demonstrators who gathered on a call by Maninder Singh Bitta, a Sikh politician and Youth Congress president. "America, come to your senses," they shouted.

The protest was provoked by a letter written by the US president to a group of US Congressman who sought US intervention to stop alleged human rights abuses by police battling a waning Sikh militancy in India's Punjab state.

Clinton said in the letter that he wanted a "peaceful solution that protected Sikh rights" in Punjab, where "abuses still occur."

The Youth Congress leader denounced "constant meddling" by Washington in the internal affairs of India, noting US utterances on alleged human rights abuses in Kashmir as well.

Bitta, who last year survived an attempted assassination by Sikh militants, said the United States had tended to "totally gloss over the issue of terrorism" while voicing concern for human rights.

Clinton's concern was unwarranted because "Punjab is witnessing peace and prosperity again after a decade of terrorist violence" and the Indian constitution protects the rights of all religious minorities, he said.

Sikh separatist lobbies are active in the United States, campaigning for Congressional support for their cause and helping fund the Punjab militants.

Separatist violence in the rich farming state has fallen dramatically over the past year, with hundreds of militants killed or captured.

Clinton Views on Punjab Called 'Uncharitable'

BK2601112694 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Commentary by Bhushan Marwah of THE HINDUSTAN TIMES: "India's 45th Republic Day"]

[Text] India has taken a confident stride toward its 45th Republic Day [26 Jan] as a country with more respect in the community of nations, better political stability, and substantially liberalized foreign trade as well as domestic economy.

In the international relations, India has continued to strive for better relations with other countries, particularly its neighbors; and barring Pakistan, it has met with a tremendous success in building up realistic, mutually respectful, and economically cooperative relationship with all the countries, more so with its immediate neighbors. Even with Pakistan, India has been all along keen to normalize its ties and have a mutually beneficial economic and cultural exchange. However, Pakistan's attitude has been grossly unreasonable, aggressively chauvinistic, and designed to malign this country. The Interservices Intelligence, ISI, of Pakistan has been aiding and abetting terrorist activities as well as current of separatism in Kashmir, Punjab, and the eastern parts of this country. The latest reports suggest that Pakistan is preparing more than 10,000 Afghan mojahedin to push them into the Kashmir Valley to escalate militancy-related violence in the valley in its bid to continue disturbance in the state. Unnerved by the success of the security forces in their anti-militancy operations in recent months in Kashmir, Pakistan has evidently drawn this massive plan to push in more trained militants to further boost the otherwise sagging morale of the militants in the valley.

Surprisingly, the United States of America is not only turning a blind eye to all this, President Clinton has lately made biased and misinformed remarks on Kashmir, Punjab, and perceived abuse of human rights in this country. His remarks on Punjab on finding a solution to protect Sikhs' rights are not only uncharitable but also negate the very structure of secularism on which Indian polity and society are based. It goes contrary to the fabric of Indian Constitution where it is enshrined that in this country, everybody's right is protected irrespective of his caste, color and, creed. Predictably, India has taken strong exception to U.S. President's observation on Punjab and rejected the statement which speaks of a solution that protects Sikhs' rights. It should be abundantly clear to USA and, indeed, rest of the civilized world, that India's commitment to human rights and democracy is axiomatic [as heard] to India's existence. At the same time, this country does not accept external prescriptions in this regard. India hopes that the United States, as another democracy, will value India's policy of secularism and democracy and make more positive moves in the context of India's amiable and meaningful relations. [sentence as heard]

Happily, India has appreciated the economic and political stability in today's world as a driving force in international relations. India has responded remarkably to the increasing globalization of economic process through a wide-ranging program of economic reforms. In a short period of about two and half years, major reforms have been undertaken in industrial policy, foreign trade and exchange rate policies, taxation policies, and the financial sector. The basic medium-term objective of

these policies is to lay the foundation for sustained growth of output and employment in the context of increasing global competitiveness of the Indian economy. The country is expected to receive around $2 billion in nondebt-creating flows of foreign investment this year. Equity issues abroad by Indian companies have been highly successful. This year, agriculture is expected to receive 2 to 3 percent growth. Interestingly, a U.S.-based economic forecasting company, the (?Wharton) Economic Forecasting Association, WEFA, has projected India's real GDP [gross domestic product] to grow by 5.6 percent in 1994. With an increase in net exports and agricultural incomes, the growth is predicted to be 6.1 percent in 1995. These projections are based on the findings of a study that merchandise exports will rise by 18.6 percent in 1993.

U.S., Russia Urged To Stop Pressing NPT

BK2501134394 Delhi PATRIOT in English 17 Jan 94 p 4

[Editorial: "New Agenda on Arm-Twisting"]

[Text] In a joint statement on nuclear non-proliferation, Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin have asked India and Pakistan to be a part of the multilateral talks aimed at "transforming the subcontinent into a nuclear-free zone". While Mr. Clinton's crusading zeal to keep Asia tethered on the other side of the nuclear divide is old hat, the surprise package is Mr. Yeltsin's adoption of Mr. Clinton's preachy role—to India and Pakistan—on missile and nuclear non-proliferation. No doubt, Mr. Yeltsin is toeing the American line, but it is totally at variance—therefore, the surprise—with the more guardedly prudent stand of the former Soviet Union, which had not publicly joined the London Club on the nuclear issue. And, therefore, tactfully avoided pressing India too hard on the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] issue. Mr. Yeltsin apparently has no such compunctions in joining the Big-League in its discriminatory attitude of keeping the Third World away from nuclear technology. India's reluctance to do so is a morally justifiable one. While she has not balked at the prospect of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty coming into force in 1996, India has taken exception to the regional pressure that is being applied on her to accept the NPT, or its regional variation cobbled together by Islamabad and Washington. The position taken by the presidents of America and Russia makes little sense if the nuclear weapons powers continue to exercise their prerogative of testing and developing their nuclear arsenals. A vapid declaration of "no first use" sounds even sillier, if also discriminatory, when the U.S. in particular laughs at any suggestion of a global ban on nuclear testing as a first step towards eliminating all nuclear weapons. The "have's", it would appear, are not so susceptible to U.S. pressures on nuclear disarmament, and can with impunity cock a snook at Uncle Sam's vain glorious threats of applying economic sanctions on those found guilty of testing. China exploded her nuclear device with aplomb; and North Korea unequivocally showed that "tough measures" just would not work. But what of the U.S. indulgences that have been responsible for furnishing Israel's "clandestine nuclear arsenal," and of overlooking Pakistan's boast of possessing military nuclear capability? Mr. Clinton and Mr. Yeltsin would do well to desist from feeding us such pious homilies on NPT, and revise their opinions on what India should, or should not, do. India's security imperatives—surrounded as she is with nuclear warheads cutting a wide swathe from the Central Asian Republics to the Indian Ocean and eastwards in China—demand a certain policy. There should be global action for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. Pakistan's premier Benazir Bhutto has said that her country will not roll back its nuclear programme "under any circumstances". Surely, there is a limit to which India can be pushed.

Singapore Minister Says Visit 'Successful'

BK2701101194 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] The Singapore prime minister, Mr. Goh Chok Tong, has described his current visit to India as successful. Speaking to AIR [All India Radio] correspondent Shyama Prasad at the ceremonial departure function at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] this morning, Mr. Tong said that he could establish close ties with the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, during the visit. He said agreements and decisions taken during the visit have to be implemented soon. India and Singapore have signed three agreements on tourism, shipping, and avoidance of double taxation during the visit.

Mr. Tong met the president, the vice president, and the prime minister and discussed bilateral and multilateral issues of mutual concern. He held discussions with representatives of trade and industry in the capital and discussed investment proposals with them. Accompanied by a high-level delegation, including foreign trade and industry minsters, top officials, and some members of parliament, Mr. Tong will also have consultations with leading industrialists in Bangalore and Bombay.

Mr. Tong left for Agra this morning. He will proceed to Bangalore this evening where he will lay the foundation stone for an information technology park. The park is being set up as a joint venture by consortium of Singapore and Indian industries and the Karnataka government. Mr. Tong will leave for Bombay tomorrow evening. He will inaugurate the representative office of the Development Bank of Singapore there. Mr. Tong will leave for home on Sunday [30 January].

Iran

Rafsanjani Receives Tajik Foreign Minister

LD2701120094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Tajik Foreign Minister Rashid Olimov today, who conveyed a message from the president of Tajikistan.

In this meeting, which was also attended by Foreign Minister Velayati, Tajikistan's foreign minister conveyed the very sincere greetings of Tajik President Rakhmanov and handed his written message to the president. Submitting a report about the latest developments in Tajikistan, the Tajik foreign minister informed the president of the decision of the Tajik Government about the holding of general elections and the establishment of peace and stability in that country.

Olimov stressed that the Tajik nation and government have enormous respect and affection for the Islamic Republic of Iran and hope that, with the help of the friends of Tajikistan—especially Iran—they will witness national reconciliation and peace and security in Tajikistan in the near future.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani then expressed his thanks for the kind message of the Tajik president and welcomed the decision of that government to bring about national reconciliation and an end to internal clashes. He said: The only solution for the well-being of the people of Tajikistan is in cooperation, national reconciliation, and solidarity. Clashes, fighting, and ignoring a section of the society will produce no benefits and will result in the destruction of national capabilities. No one will benefit from it. We hope that we will be able to witness the return of calm and stability to Tajikistan as soon as possible, and we are prepared to help you achieve this goal.

Memorandum of Understanding Signed With UNIDO

LD2601205594 Tehran IRNA in English 2024 GMT 26 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 26, IRNA—A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between Iran and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) here today.

The MOU, signed in the presence of Iranian Minister of Industry Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh and UNIDO Director General Maria Campos, stresses, inter alia, cooperation with the developing countries in the areas of industrial development, development of human resources, accelerating the process of privatization, and supporting the cottage industries.

Campos said that the region has a peculiar industrial potential and that Iran had a particular industrial capability, adding that cooperation between Iran and other regional countries could lead to industrial developmint in the region.

Referring to the new programs and priorities of UNIDO he said that one of the priorities of the organization was to assist Iran towards industrialization.

Ne'matzadeh also said that in view of the economic developments exprienced in the world, cooperation between Iran and UNIDO towards regional stability and carrying out industrial cooperation is useful both for Iran and the international community.

Students Criticize Interior Minister, Condemn U.S.

NC2601201994 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 5 Jan 94 pp 1, 9

["Text" of statement by Islamic Students Association of the Amir Kabir Industrial University; date not given]

[Excerpts] Your Excellency, Esteemed Interior Minister, following your remarks in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which were full of accusations, when you hid under the cover of "solidarity against the United States" and attacked the purest Muslim forces that believe in the Islamic system and were the heart of those anti- U.S. forces who were behind the advent of the "second revolution" [the occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran by students], it is necessary to mention the following points: [passage omitted]

—Do you fear students' protests against questioning the values of the revolution and their condemnation of American-style Islam and its suitability, as elucidated by the imam? This [American-style Islam] takes the form of foreign borrowing and economic policies that result in greater pressure on the deprived and oppressed strata; unlimited imports that have undermined the production system of the country; factories that have been auctioned off to the benefit of foreigners and affiliated investors; extensive and ludicrous publicity for foreign goods such as American Coca-Cola, foreign appliances, candies, bananas, and so on with foreign loans that have antagonized the Muslim forces and domestic producers; opening doors to foreign trucks; and the propagation of all means of decadence that are opposed to the pristine culture of Islam and our Islamic country. [passage omitted covered in referent item]

—Your Excellency, you are the one who is violating all the revolutionary values. You have indulged in extensive flights of fancy, which have exceeded all the boundaries specified by the founder of the Republic. Therefore, please consider this warning seriously; that you are not in a position where you, Mr. Minister, can make such claims, as all your legitimacy and that of your decrees depends on the fact that you are an official of the Islamic Republic, which is headed by the Vali-ye Faqih [The supreme jurisconsult]. [passage omitted]

O God Almighty! You know what the Americans and their ilk have done in our country and the entire world. They have shed the blood of Muslims, have subjugated and pillaged our resources and our honor, and have planted their puppet governments. They have killed, burned, and plundered and now they are preparing for the most extensive and multifaceted onslaught of all, based on their communications technology. We beseech

you to grant our officials awareness, the power to plan against this eventuality. [passage omitted]

Nepal

Prime Minister Faces Opposition Groups at Rally

BK2401104094 Hong Kong AFP in English 1030 GMT 24 Jan 94

[Text] Kathmandu, Jan 24 (AFP)—Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala was jeered and catcalled by opposition groups at a rally south of here Monday [24 Jan], communist party sources said.

The demonstrators, brandishing black flags, were activists of the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML) and other opposition groups.

Koirala, who was speaking at Mahendra Nagar, 435 kilometres (270 miles) southwest of Kathmandu, said: "I have seen black flags many times but such things will not disconcert me."

He said protests and slogans were not sufficient to speed development. More important was the stability of democracy which had been restored in Nepal after a long struggle, the state radio quoted him as saying.

"Everybody has the right to opposition in a democracy, but I wonder whether this right has any place in a communist system," he asked.

He urged Nepalese to unite to fight elements trying to weaken democracy.

He said communism had almost vanished from the face of the earth and was unlikely to rise again.

First Stock Exchange Formed; 62 Companies Listed

BK1401121694 Hong Kong AFP in English 1155 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Kathmandu, Jan 14 (AFP)—Nepal has formally launched a stock exchange for the first time with 62 public limited companies listed, a Finance Ministry official said Friday [14 Jan].

A Finance Ministry official said of the listed companies, only 36 are operating while the rest are gradually coming into the scene.

"The paid up value of the 62 listed companies is 1.68 billion million [as received] US dollars and the market value of them is 3.8 billion rupees," the official said.

"While launching the stock exchange market in Kathmandu, the government also issued the broker-licenses to 25 people," he said.

"After amendments in the Nepal Company Act in the forthcoming winter session of the parliament, provisions will be made to permit foreign entrepreneurs and individuals to purchase shares," he said.

"All formalities for foreign company trading for the Nepalese shares will be completed by mid-July," he added.

The main objective of creating the Stock Exchange Market in Nepal is to help develop an open market economy, the official said.

Soon after the opening of the exchange Thursday [13 Jan], shares worth 76,370 rupees were sold, he said.

"The United States Agency for International Development and the Unit Trust of India have helped to provide manpower training to handle the stock exchange," the foreign ministry official said.

Pakistan

UN Envoy Strengthens Resolve on Kashmir Issue

BK2701030394 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan will continue its international efforts to apprise the world of the Kashmir issue and to resolve it. At a news conference in New York, United Nations Representative Jamshed Marker said Pakistan's distinct success at the UN last year was that it was able to bring the Kashmir issue before the international community. Marker referred to President Clinton's address at the UN in September last year, in which he made a special reference to the Kashmir issue. He said India agreed to begin talks with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue due to international presssure and this pressure continues. Marker said despite India's attempts to conceal the atrocities of its troops, the international community has come to know more about Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir.

Bhutto Departs for Switzerland, Bosnia

BK2701062394 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 27 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto left Islamabad this morning for Zurich. She is on the way to Davos, where she will participate in the World Economic Forum meeting. She will also go to Geneva to address the United Nations Human Rights Commission meeting and draw the attention of the international community to the gross human rights violations committed by Indian troops in occupied Kashmir. Later, accompanied by Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, she will go to Bosnia-Herzegovina to express solidarity with the Bosnian people during this time of difficulty.

Shift in Russia's Stand on Kashmir Noted

BK2401123594 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 24 Jan 94 p 3

[Editorial: "Shift in Russia's Stand on the Kashmir Issue"]

[Text] The revelation by a leading Indian daily, THE HINDU, that Russian President Yeltsin has recently written a letter to Narasimha Rao, expressing concern over the violations of human rights in occupied Kashmir and calling on India to find a just solution to the Kashmir problem reflects a shift in Moscow's stand on the Kashmir issue. Even the souls of Hitler and Mussolini are feeling ashamed of the manner in which the Indian security forces have been carrying out the heinous and appalling crimes in the savage massacres of the Kashmiris including children, burning their homes, and gang-raping women on the pretext of their being connected with the Hizbul Mojahedin and the Movement for the Freedom of Kashmir organizations. India has done as much as it could to cover up these brutalities by carrying out anti-Pakistan propaganda, but Western countries and the international human rights organizations have now become fully aware of the actual situation and have been voicing strong protests against the gross violation of human rights in occupied Kashmir. Lately, besides Asia Watch and Amnesty International, several members of the British Parliament and prominent Indian parliamentarian Indrajit Gupta have also joined these protests; and the Indian Government, after getting tired of this situation, has flatly refused to allow a delegation of the Amnesty International to visit occupied Kashmir.

Under these circumstances, the advice from India's old ally—a staunch supporter of New Delhi on the Kashmir issue in the past—to find a just solution to the Kashmir dispute reflects the increasing awareness and concern in the entire world for an early resolution of this issue. India will not be able to counter these pressures for long and will, therefore, be forced to settle the problem in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. Considering this situation as a good augury, Pakistan will have to further intensify its struggle to fully apprise the international public opinion of its stand on Kashmir.

Editorial Condemns Amnesty International Report

BK2501073594 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Jan 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Don't Preach to Pakistan About Refugees' Rights"]

[Text] Amnesty International has come out with a report strongly critical of Paksitan's closing of its borders with Afghanistan. The human rights organisation feels that there is no justification for preventing the right of people to seek asylum, particularly at such a crucial time when renewed fierce fighting in Kabul has forced thousands to flee to safer areas. A BBC report on Saturday [22 Jan] painted Pakistan as a villain in this regard, and even played up differences between the federal and NWFP governments over the issue. At the same time the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has also urged Islamabad to reopen the border, saying that the policy would create difficulties for refugees. Thousands have been turned back from the Torkhum border, the main entry into Pakistan for those fleeing the Kabul fighting.

The first impulse is to lash back at these self-righteous international organisations for preaching to us about refugees rights, when the western countries of their origin have themselves repeatedly ignored all such concepts of international responsibility. Pakistan has a much better track record of hospitality and sensitivity than any other sovereign nation, having hosted over three million Afghans for over a decade since the Afghan war started. Yet when the Russians were thrown out, and the Cold War came to an end, suddenly everyone lost interest in Afghanistan, at one time the front line in the war against communism. More than a million refugees are still in Pakistan, but international agencies and countries had washed their hands of the problem much before this latest round of internecine fighting. Despite repeated requests for aid and rehabilitation funds, Pakistan has found itself increasingly taking on the entire burden of a refugee problem for which the blame lies as much on the West as it does on the former Soviet Union.

Then, there is no reason to criticise Pakistan as if it is committing some sort of heinous human rights violation. The stand of the Pakistani government is quite valid that since fighting has been thus far limited to only Kabul and a few adjoining areas, there is no reason why refugees cannot be shifted to other places in Afghanistan which are otherwise untouched by the fighting. Leaving aside the fact that Afghans have begun to find it more convenient to jump across the border than find shelter in other parts of their country, Pakistan has not left the refugees to fend for themselves—camps are being set up inside Afghan territory, and Pakistan has committed a substantial amount of relief aid to the effort to feed and shelter the needy refugees. As for the right of asylum, there is no law that says that a country should open the floodgates in a situation such as the one Pakistan is faced with. The US wasn't willing to take on even a few thousand Haitian refugees, preferring to keep them at sea or forcibly returning them to their homeland, where chances of persecution were much higher than in Afghanistan. That was criminal. A decade of experience with the Afghan refugees has shown us at least this much that when dealing with the kinds of numbers as in this scenario, it is hard to distinguish the persecuted from the needy. Perhaps UNHCR could set up an appropriate office in the refugee camps in Afghan territory, and then see how many other countries are willing to accept asylum seekers from among the applicants they get. With the kinds of laws adopted by many European countries regarding asylum, it seems unlikely that there will be many.

Instead of preaching to Pakistan about standards of responsibility that we know better about, AI should concentrate on urging the West to atone for its crimes against Afghanistan. When Amnesty accuses the warring parties in Afghanistan of using civilians as human shields, does it forget that this is only a natural continuation of the policies of the superpowers in their quest for global supremacy? Their violations of human rights are much more significant, yet all Amnesty has to say to them is: Please try to send some aid, if it's not too much of a bother. It's for a good cause.

We cannot afford to take on more refuges simply on the promises of the international agencies, because unless they can get other countries to pay their share. Pakistan will once again be left to absorb the costs into its own barely solvent economy. If the US can get the Gulf states to foot the bill for such a massively destructive war effort in Iraq, surely there is something available to use constructively for the Afghans. Amnesty International would do well to consider human rights on a macro rather than a micro level. Don't expect Third World countries to go out of their way if you can't even convince your own people to start taking responsibility for their doings and misdoings.

Notwithstanding this aspect of the Afghan Refugees' cases, our Interior Ministry needs to handle the issue with sensitivity. Eye witness accounts of arrival at Torkhum suggest insensitive handling of the policy laid down by Islamabad. There are reports of crying women and children at the barrier and of families who fled in such a hurry that they brought their dead. Some women have given birth waiting on the other side. The border guards enforced the rule that only those recommended by the Afghan authorities would be admitted. The Afghans with all their humanity burnt out by a long exposure to brutalities, recommended only those who could pay for their recommendation. The going rate was Rs 500/- [as published] per person. Pakistan rupee is hard currency in Afghanistan. It is difficult to suggest any foolproof method of verifying genuine hardship cases. But a few honest officers posted as assessors may help.

Clinton's Support for Indian Sikhs Welcomed

BK2501121394 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 25 Jan 94 p 3

[Editorial: "President Clinton's Support for the Sikhs' Rights"]

[Text] U.S. President Clinton has supported the rights of the Indian Sikhs and stressed the need for a peaceful settlement of their problems. The Indian Government has strongly protested President Clinton's letter to the Khalistan Council and warned that the U.S. pronouncements may have a negative impact on bilateral relations.

The international community has now begun to feel strongly about the shameful treatment meted out to the non-Hindu minorities, especially the Muslims and the Sikhs, in India in the name of secularism. That is why the international media has started to focus attention on the armed struggle for freedom in occupied Kashmir and the repression against the Indian Sikhs, and a voice is also being raised in their favor at the international level. A handful of higher caste Hindus have made the lives of all non-Hindu minorities in India extremely difficult.

The Sikh minority had backed the Hindus in the struggle for independence and had rejected great leader Mohammad Ali Jinnah's request for support to the Muslim League and his offer of a separate homeland for the Sikhs. They, however, realized their political mistake soon after independence. For the past 10 years, the Indian Sikhs have been waging a struggle to establish an independent Khalistan state and, presently, there is not a single Sikh family in Indian Punjab from which at least one person has not been killed at the hands of the Indian forces and the police. The manner in which the sanctity of the holiest seat of the Sikh faith, the Golden Temple, was trampled upon during the Indira Gandhi regime is glaring proof of the prejudice of the Hindu mind against the holy places of the non-Hindu minorities.

The call made by President Clinton for a peaceful settlement of the issue of the Sikhs' independence is appropriate and justified in every respect. Besides the Sikhs, the Indian Muslims, the untouchables, the Nagas, and other oppressed sections also reserve the right to demand independence from India for their survival.

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